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## Book Reviews

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-Heather Sutherland, Roderich Ptak, *China's seaborne trade with South and Southeast Asia (1200-1750)*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999, xii + 366 pp. [Variorum collected studies series CS638.]

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-Volker Grabowsky, Jane Richard Hanks, *Tribes of the northern Thailand frontier*. (with a foreword by Nicola Tannenbaum), New Haven, CT: Yale University Southeast Asia studies, 2001, xlviii + 319 pp. [Monograph 51.], Lucien Mason Hanks (eds)

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## Book Reviews

J.M. Gullick, *A history of Selangor (1766-1939)*. Kuala Lumpur: Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, 1998, vi + 220 pp. [MBRAS Monograph 28.] ISBN 9679948102. Price: MYR 50.00 (paperback).

TIMOTHY BARNARD

The publication of individual state histories in Malaysia has long been a speciality of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (MBRAS). Beginning with many of the colonial-era writings of Richard Winstedt, these histories were often published under the patronage of royal families and provided accounts of state dynasties in the century or so prior to colonial rule, followed by details of how they came under various forms of British influence. These works then describe the colonial economy and bureaucratic structure of the state. The book under review here is no exception to this tradition. The author, J.M. Gullick, is a former British colonial official who has published numerous monographs and articles on Malaysian society and history. Much of his work has focused on the development of Kuala Lumpur, which is surrounded by the state of Selangor today. Bringing his detailed knowledge of the region to this work, Gullick has contributed another work to this long tradition within Malaysian historiography.

Selangor is an interesting state in Malaysia since it represents many of the major themes in the national history on a local scale. Bugis migrants to the Straits founded the *negeri* along a series of rivers between Melaka and Perak in the mid-eighteenth century. While the Bugis dominated the coasts, the hinterlands were the home of Sumatrans who worked the fields and traded in the interior. In the early nineteenth century there was a concerted effort to develop the tin mines in the hinterlands. The importation of Chinese labour, and the potential riches from tin, led to a civil war and eventual British administration of the *negeri* as a part of the Federated Malay States. By the early twentieth century, Selangor also became part of the rubber boom that

spread throughout Malaya. The rich background of events revolving around these revolutionary transformations is the core of this monograph.

The book is divided into 11 chapters, with an additional three appendices. In spirit, however, it can be divided into two sections, and each is radically different in quality. The first section, encompassing the first six chapters, focuses on the history of Selangor until the mid-1880s. Gullick describes the rise of Bugis migrants as rulers of the state in the mid-eighteenth century and the subsequent conflicts with Chinese miners and Sumatran farmers and traders over the next century. These chapters contain an incredible array of facts and details, including genealogical tables – a tired standby in writing on precolonial Malay states – and 'chronological summaries' to describe the numerous intrigues in the royal court or alliances between various factions. The effect is deadening. Gullick appears to be dealing with material with which he is less than comfortable, thus leading to descriptions of minor battles and personalities.

The second half of the monograph, however, provides a fascinating account of life and society in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Selangor. The author is clearly comfortable with this period and draws upon his vast knowledge of the archives and other secondary works. The focus of these chapters shifts from the chronological descriptions of the first half of the book to a more thematic approach. Among the topics covered are the transformation of agriculture in Selangor, the development of Kuala Lumpur as an administrative centre, the difficulties the royal family faced in a modernizing society; and the spread of rubber plantations and their effect on the economy. Each of these chapters is fascinating and reflects the contributions Gullick has made to the study of the Malaysian past. The book ends with a chapter that broadly summarizes events following World War I until 1939, and chooses not to proceed further because the author does not want to deal with 'living memory' and 'modern times' (p. 1).

*A history of Selangor* is the latest in a long line of state histories to be published by the MBRAS and sponsored by Malay royalty. Within such a context it harks back to the colonial-era work of Richard Winstedt, R.J. Wilkinson and M. Sheppard, and deserves a prominent position next to the works of these pioneers of Malaysian historical writing.

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Michael L. Ross, *Timber booms and institutional breakdown in Southeast Asia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, xvi + 237 pp. ISBN 0521791677. Price: GBP 30.00 (hardback).

OKKE BRAADBAART

*Timber booms and institutional breakdown in Southeast Asia* tells three stories. At the country level, it examines the erosion of forestry management in three Southeast Asian states: Indonesia, the Philippines, and Malaysia. These country cases are set in a wider theoretical framework pertaining to forestry management in developing states. Finally, the book comments on new public choice theory.

By carefully mixing theories and methods from different branches of the social sciences, the author manages to turn this ambitious undertaking into a tightly argued case. The book does a felicitous job of combining the respective strengths of a variety of disciplines, from political science and public administration to new public choice economics. It manages to convey a sense of *couleur locale* and everyday micro-level political bargaining, at the same time as being consistent in its argumentation and its use of technical terminology.

Not everyone will agree with the author that rent seizing – attempts by government officials to control the allocation of concession rights – is a form of rent seeking that merits a separate entry in the dictionary of public choice. Some readers may have questions about the rent seeking perspective itself. With its black-and-white distinction between ‘productive’ and ‘unproductive’ economic activities, the theory of rent seeking is part of a venerable but disputed intellectual tradition that counts Adam Smith and Karl Marx among its contributors – for an overview, see: Helen Boss, *Theories of surplus and transfer; Parasites and producers in economic thought* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1990). One might also disagree with the author’s assertion, in the final chapter, that government control can offer a satisfactory solution to natural resources management.

These quibbles, however, do not detract from the value of *Timber booms and institutional breakdown*. This is a book that tackles a big question: why do governments choose to squander their natural resources? That is, why do they aim for short-term optimization rather than go for the long haul? It would be unrealistic to presume that Ross has all the answers. For this reader, the combination of theory with three country cases studies presented in an explicitly comparative format delivered substantive added value. *Timber booms and institutional breakdown in Southeast Asia* is strongly recommended to anyone interested in Asian forests, natural resources management or governance problems in developing countries.

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Patrick Vinton Kirch and Roger C. Green, *Hawaiki, ancestral Polynesia; An essay in historical anthropology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, xvii + 375 pp. ISBN 0521783097, price USD 70.80 (hardback); 052178879X, USD 26.75 (paperback).

H.J.M. CLAESSEN

*Hawaiki* is a well-written, thoroughly documented and nicely illustrated book. Kirch and Green combine their extensive knowledge of Polynesia's past in order to construct a trustworthy picture of the Polynesian homeland, known in myth and tradition as 'Hawaiki'. I refrain from using the word 'reconstruction', for although the authors present views of the past that are as good as possible given the evidence, these views remain their own personal constructions. Two hundred and fifty-two footnotes and thirty-nine pages of references testify to their thorough scholarship. Their coverage of the literature is remarkable, but I was surprised that Cook's journals, which offer the first recorded observations on the essential similarity of Polynesian cultures, are not included in the reference list. Also absent are references to the publications of Andrew Sharp (1956, 1963), who initiated the discussion on the seafaring abilities of the Polynesians, an essential part of the central argument in *Hawaiki*.

The book is divided into two parts: Part I, *The phylogenetic model: theory and method*, and Part II, *Rediscovering Hawaiki*. In a separate prologue, Kirch and Green present their views on historical anthropology. Why this prologue was not included in Part I is not clear to me, for theoretical and methodological matters are discussed in both. The authors' approach is a 'holistic' one, defined as 'an integrated set of perspectives and methods trained upon a diversity of evidence' (p. 2). In concrete terms this means that the book integrates findings from archaeology, ethnography and linguistics. Such a combined approach is necessary, for none of the three disciplines is in itself sufficient to cover the whole spectrum of problems and data. The data are ordered with the help of a 'phylogenetic model' which 'emphasizes historical sequences of cultural differentiation or divergence within related groups, regardless of the mechanisms of transmission' (p. 13). This method very much resembles the 'Field of Anthropological Study' approach developed in Leiden by De Josselin de Jong (1984) to deal with the problem of regional variation in Indonesia.

In the opinion of Kirch and Green, knowledge of 'Ancestral Polynesian Society' (hereafter referred to as APS) is 'a critical step in any evolutionary study of cultural differentiation within Polynesia' (p. 19). Regarding the problem of evolution and evolutionism, Kirch and Green state that many

archaeologists (and also anthropologists) consider the unilineal and/or progressive evolutionary models as naive and outdated; but they do not suggest an alternative model to replace it.

Kirch and Green believe that their 'triangulation method' (another term for the combined use of data from archaeology, linguistics, and ethnography) might also be applied productively elsewhere. It is interesting to note that for some time a number of Africanists and Mayanists have been working along similar lines, apparently without knowledge of Kirch and Green's work. However it is Kirch and Green who present the most sophisticated application of the triangulation method, perhaps in part because Polynesia is a particularly most favorable region for its application. There is sufficient evidence from archaeology and ethnography to establish that the Lapita cultural complex was ancestral to the Polynesian culture, and that the geographical cradle of the APS lay in the western Polynesian archipelagoes, while the early eastern Polynesian stage was centred in the Cook-Society-Marquesas region (p. 36). The problem, then, is how to combine an independently-dated archaeological record with specific internal subgroups within a language family. Such a combination would yield 'convincing estimates of time depth for a sequence of proto-languages' (p. 41). It is exactly this problem that is tackled in *Hawaiki, ancestral Polynesia*.

When seeking to ascertain the full meaning of words found in old dictionaries, the authors seek clarification in ethnographies. This leads to the question: to what extent can Polynesian culture be considered a 'discrete segment of cultural history'? The occurrence of numerous cultural similarities and regularities across Polynesia was noted by voyagers such as James Cook (1969), De Lapérouse (1987), and Dumont d'Urville (1832). More recently, anthropologists such as Sahlins (1958), Goldman (1970), and Van Bakel (1989) have also portrayed Polynesia as a discrete cultural region. Kirch and Green, however, go further, not only describing the underlying cultural pattern, but also explaining its origins. They establish the APS once and for all as a specific, unique reality. Some 3,300 years ago, human expansion in 'Remote Oceania' (Polynesia) began as a series of rapid colonizations. The initial expansion reached Fiji, Tonga, and the Samoan archipelago, while eastern Polynesia was reached somewhat later. This view is not really new: Suggs (1960) already proposed the same sequence of occupation. What is new is the rather precise dating of the big leap eastward.

To insist on the essential unity of the Polynesian culture is not to imply that this culture is a uniform one. In the first place, note Kirch and Green, differences are found between western and eastern Polynesia. They demonstrate this by describing variations in the kinship system: Eastern Polynesian kinship systems are generally characterized by seniority and are widely used as systems of legitimation, whereas the western Polynesian kinship systems



are characterized in the first place by gender duality. But correct though this may be, the difference is a gradual one: in the western islands the original system gradually lost many of the characteristics still found in the eastern islands. In the second place, it should be noted that differences in culture can also be found between individual archipelagos – for instance, between the Hawai'ian islands, the Society Islands, and the Marquesas. These more local contrasts seem to be connected with such variables as island size, soil fertility, population density, and the relative geographical isolation (Van Bakel 1989).

In the first part of their book, Kirch and Green establish the existence of the APS. In the second part they set out, using the triangulation method, to construct its specific content or characteristics. Some characteristics of the APS can be established fairly easily: climate, physical milieu, and type of land. This makes it possible to draw conclusions with regard to diet and artefacts. Using long lists of Proto-Polynesian words, Kirch and Green then proceed to construct the world of the APS in more detail. They point out (p. 109) that the biogeographic differences between the Tonga-Samoa region and the former home region further to the west had real consequences for the colonizers. Many plants and animals which they were used to were lacking in their new surroundings, and although they imported key economic species such as crop plants and domestic animals, in most other respects they had to adapt to the new circumstances.

The greater portion of Part II is filled with subjects that have archaeological referents: subsistence, food, material culture. Here the triangulation method works with impressive smoothness, combining data from excavations, ethnographies, and linguistic research to construct a long-vanished culture in remarkable detail. Things become difficult, however, when it comes to the topic of social and political organization, on which archaeology offers far fewer clues and Kirch and Green 'must consequently depend more heavily on linguistic evidence for cultural (emic) categories, and [...] need to be [...] rigorous in constructing semantic history hypotheses, informed by intensive ethnographic comparison' (p. 201).

There are archaeological indications that while the total population of the Tonga-Samoa region grew, individual social groups remained small, with existing groups being subject to regular fission and new communities being established inland. In time the connection between kinship group and landed property was dissolved. Kirch and Green distinguish the Proto-Polynesian terms *\*kainanga* and *\*kaainga*. They define *\*kainanga* as 'a land-holding or -controlling group tracing ascent from a common ancestor' (p. 213-4). These groups were exogamous and probably unilineal. The *\*kainanga* were larger-than-minimal residential groups incorporating several of the smaller *\*kaainga*. The authors suggest 'that the leader or titular head of the *\*kainanga* was the *\*qariki*, the priest-chief' (p. 214). The term *\*kaainga* 'referred primarily

to people, as much as to their holdings of both fixed and movable property over extended periods of time' (p. 215). Here, however, only a minimal group of people is involved. A *\*kainanga* consisted of several *\*kaainga*, and in many cases these were ranked. The highest ranked among several *\*kaainga* would have been that of the senior descent line, tracing its origins directly back to the eponymous ancestor, and it was likely to be from this highest-ranking unit that the leaders of the larger *\*kainanga* were recruited. Kirch and Green emphasize, however, that the relationship between the *\*kaainga* was not always a hierarchical one, heterarchical structures also occurring (p. 217). Apart from the distinction between kin groups, there was also a distinction between elder and younger people among same-sex siblings. These two distinctions together lay at the foundation of the conical clan – usually called a 'ramage' in the literature on Polynesia (Sahlins 1958; Van Bakel 1989) – and the ranking of descent lines, which in turn formed the basis for the complex ranking of chiefs on the larger islands. Special attention is given by Kirch and Green to the development of the *ariki* concept, for this type of chiefship is found everywhere in Polynesia.

The most difficult part of the Hawaiki culture to construct is the world of the gods, ancestors, and rituals. The authors begin this task with the widely known concepts of *mana*, *tapu*, and *noa*. Not surprisingly, the lexical and ethnographical data show that *tapu* has a core meaning of 'prohibited, sacred, or under ritual restriction', while *mana* has a core meaning of 'power, supernatural force' (p. 239). The concept of *noa* centres around the notion of 'ordinary, or worthless', or 'that which is unrestrictive, free from tapu' (p. 240).

The next concept to be tackled is that of a god or gods. The term *\*qatua*, meaning deity, is widely reflected across the Polynesian languages. A second word, *\*qaitu*, less well evidenced, indicates something like 'spirit' or 'ghost'. An important conclusion drawn by Kirch and Green is that 'the deification and ritual supplication of ancestors was virtually universal' in Polynesia. This leads them to conclude that ancestors, as well as gods, were at the core of the ritual system. In this system the *\*qariki* also played a role, for he was not only the ranking or senior member of a ramage or a ramage segment, but also a kind of priest.

*Hawaiki* testifies that the construction of a culture long past is possible, but that to do so requires a formidable amount of knowledge. There is no doubt that Kirch and Green do possess that knowledge in a more than sufficient degree, and what is more, that they succeed remarkably well in conveying their views in clear language. They have produced a fascinating book which will be a landmark in Polynesian archaeology, anthropology, and linguistics for years to come, standing lonely at the top of the relevant literature.

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R. E. Elson, *Suharto; A political biography*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, xix + 389 pp. ISBN 0521773261. Price: GBP 27.95 (hardback).

HAROLD CROUCH

In the mid-1990s, Robert Elson, whose studies of the Javanese peasantry during the nineteenth century had been much praised, turned his attention to a completely different subject: a political biography of a contemporary political leader whose origins were among the Javanese peasantry but who currently, and for much of the previous three decades, served as the president of his country. By the time the biography was completed several years later, Suharto had been forced out of office and the time was ripe to make an overall assessment of both his rule and his life.

Suharto's rise to the presidency was unexpected. In all the speculation in the mid-1960s about who might succeed President Sukarno, Suharto's name was never mentioned. It was the so-called 'coup attempt' on 1 October 1965, in which six leading 'political' generals were assassinated, that catapulted

Suharto, as the senior general in Jakarta on that day, to national prominence and paved the way for his eventual accession to the presidency.

Suharto pictured his childhood as that of a 'poor village boy' but, despite an unsettled family life, the young Suharto lived in town from the age of eight and remained at school until the age of 17. Elson notes speculation that Suharto's 'real' father might have been someone of some means who was able to ensure that the boy obtained a much better education than most village children. After short service in the Dutch colonial army and then in a Japanese-sponsored defence force, Suharto joined the new nationalist army after 1945. His intelligence and leadership qualities were already apparent and he was soon promoted to the rank of lieutenant-colonel in command of a regiment of 2,250 men. By then the 25-year old officer was sufficiently senior to have direct contact with the political and military leaders of the revolution, including Sukarno, Sudirman and the Sultan of Yogyakarta.

As military commander in Central Java in the 1950s, Suharto involved himself in practices that characterized his later career. Several military-sponsored commercial enterprises were launched purportedly to promote economic development in the region and to provide for the welfare of his troops. Capital was raised by imposing various levies on trade and services as well as by persuading entrepreneurs (mainly ethnic Chinese) that 'their interests would best be served by close association with the pre-eminent force in regional affairs' (pp. 62-3). One of Suharto's commercial associates in those days was 'Bob' Hasan, who was later (in 1998) to be appointed as Minister of Trade and Industry in Suharto's last cabinet and now, convicted of corruption, languishes in prison. Elson, however, doubts the common belief that Suharto cemented his relationship with another of his later cronies, Liem Sioe Liong, at that time – although it is quite likely that they knew each other.

Suharto was suddenly removed from his Central Java command because of barter trade that directly violated government regulations. But, contrary to the common perception, he was hardly disgraced. Two months later he was promoted to the rank of brigadier-general and a year later he became the first commander of the élite unit, later known as Kostrad, which played key roles in the West Irian and Malaysia campaigns. As commander of Kostrad, Suharto's cool and decisive response to the 1965 coup set him on the path to the presidency.

Elson devotes four chapters – about half the book – to relatively familiar post-1965 developments covering the removal of Sukarno, the consolidation of Suharto's rule and the challenges that he faced. The emphasis is on how Suharto dealt with the many issues that arose during these three decades – Malari, the oil boom, East Timor, rivalries within the army, Islam, the growing commercial activities of his children, and so on. Many of these issues really require a chapter each, with the result that although Elson's discussion

is generally balanced and comprehensive, due to the constraints of space it has not been possible to provide more than brief summaries of many complex issues. Finally, Elson analyses Suharto's decline and fall. In essence Suharto failed to adjust to the changing society that had been created by his own successful policies, particularly in the economic field.

In assessing Suharto's legacy, Elson tends to err on the side of generosity. Certainly Indonesia achieved remarkable economic growth under his leadership; but should he be exonerated of responsibility for the financial collapse of 1997-1998, which Elson believes 'made little impact on his overall record' (p. 307)? Elson's political assessment is more severe. He notes that 'when he left the scene, the chaos into which the country descended made it virtually ungovernable' (p. 307). Earlier in the book he places 'central responsibility' for the anti-communist massacres of 1965-1966 on Suharto, but does not emphasize this in his overall assessment of the man. On the corruption issue, Elson argues that 'Suharto was not personally a greedy man' and was only 'interested in money because it was central to his capacity to maintain power and to move Indonesia in the directions he desired' (p. 281). This assessment, however, sits uneasily alongside his 'generosity' involving billions of dollars to his children and other family members.

Elson has written an important and comprehensive biography of a man who, whatever his faults, has made his mark on his country. While we may not agree with all his judgements, Elson's arguments are always clear and balanced. As a trained historian, he has relied heavily on documentation, including anecdotes about Suharto in the writings of other authors. But what is missing are similar anecdotes from the author's own interviews. I was able to count only ten interviews among the sources identified by the author. In his final chapter he includes two stories told by 'senior colleagues' of Suharto (pp. 298-9) which provide valuable insights into Suharto's personality in ways that are difficult to capture in dry analysis. I would have appreciated more anecdotes of this type. Maybe it is part of the historian's training to rely more on written documents than on the mere oral recollections of participants.

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H.W. Arndt and Hal Hill, *Southeast Asia's economic crisis; Origins, lessons, and the way forward*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1999, ix + 182 pp. ISBN 9813055898, price SGD 28.00 (paperback); 9812300554, SGD 66.90 (hardback).

KEES VAN DIJK

The Southeast Asian financial crisis which set in after the floating of the Thai baht in July 1997 came as a shock. Economic tigers and tigers-to-be were crippled. As Hal Hill writes in his introduction to this collection of articles on the impact of the crisis in the Southeast Asian countries: 'Until 1997, the major challenge for a researcher working on Southeast Asia was to explain why most of the economies had grown so quickly for so long. Now the question is why and how the fortunes of some of these economies have been transformed so drastically.' Reading this book reminds one once again just how dramatic the crisis was, and how steeply currencies and shares fell. The contributors to the volume concentrate on individual countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines, and Vietnam) and topics (exchange rates, financial sector reforms, the impact of the crisis on poverty and equity, and its impact on political institutions).

Though the articles are rather short, they provide a good basis for a comparison of how countries with different political systems, varying degrees of authoritarian regimes, and different economic systems were hit in different degrees by the crisis, and to what extent the various governments succeeded in taking measures to mitigate its effects. They also raise some questions. In a number of contributions it is pointed out that sound economic management made the effects of the crisis in some countries less severe. Chia Siow Yue, for example, writes that 'Singapore's sound economic and financial fundamentals reflect good governance and efficient and prudent economic management – a clean government and emphasis on meritocracy, the upholding of the rule of law, and emphasis on market discipline and efficiency'. Bad governance, of course, is bad, and the Indonesian case is perhaps the best example of this. But at the same time such an interpretation makes one wonder how good governance is or should be defined, and how we should assess the role of political factors such as the ties between power holders and the business community. Singapore is not, and indeed does not wish to be, an ideal democracy by Western standards. Critics of its government may have doubts about the use of the term 'meritocracy', which is in part an ideological symbol used to distinguish Singapore from Malaysia, where the ethnic Chinese part of the population has to tolerate the fact that Malays receive systematically preferential economic and educational treatment. On the Malay website Fateha.com, moreover, it was recently asked why there is so little public dis-

cussion of nepotism within Lee Kuan Yew's family. This question was raised after the appointment in May 2002 of Lee Kuan Yew's daughter-in-law Ho Ching, who is married to Singapore's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Hsien Loong, as executive director of the government-controlled Temasek Holdings Pte, Singapore's most important conglomerate.

In his contribution on the Philippines, Gerardo Sicat observes that this country fared relatively well in the early stages of the crisis due to the economic and financial reforms implemented following an earlier national economic crisis in the 1980s and the fall of President Marcos. Among the indications of successful reform which Sicat mentions are a low level of non-performing assets, and a high capital adequacy ratio in the banking world. On these criteria, banks in Malaysia (where at the time of the financial crisis different political camps accused each other of nepotism) also score high. Nevertheless in discussing the Malaysian case, Prema-Chandra Athukorala puts part of the blame for the troubles experienced in that country on the 'intimate link between the government and business'. Such an observation raises questions not only of reform, but also of control and supervision, which are social and political rather than economic factors. Initially the Philippine economy and institutions may have stood up well to the crisis, but it would only be a couple of years before People Power, which had brought down Marcos in 1986, unseated President Estrada in January 2001 amidst allegations of corruption and graft.

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Sebastiaan Pompe, *De Indonesische algemene verkiezingen 1999*. Leiden: KITLV Uitgeverij, 1999, 290 pp. ISBN 9067181544. Price: EUR 21.25.

KEES VAN DIJK

In a little over a year, general elections will once again be held in Indonesia. If the system of the 1999 general election already differed completely from that which applied under Soeharto's New Order, in 2004 a number of further novelties will be introduced. One significant change will be the so-called open-list system, which allows Indonesians to cast a vote for a specific candidate and not, as in the past, only for a party list. Another important innovation is that for the first time in Indonesia's history it is not the People's Congress (MPR) which will elect the president; instead there will be direct presidential elections. This will probably make for a very lively campaign period – even without taking into consideration the fact that the Free Aceh Movement

wants to turn the general election in that province into a kind of referendum about independence.

Although the exact criteria are not yet known, only a limited number of parties will be allowed to participate. This is just as well. Since Soeharto's fall from power a bewildering number of political parties have come into existence. Whereas during the greater part of the New Order period only three parties were allowed, at the time of the 1999 general election there were already more than 150, and since then almost 100 more have been founded. According to the latest count in February 2003, 237 parties were currently registered at the Indonesian Ministry of Justice and Human Rights.

Some help is needed to guide us through this confusing party landscape. Here Pompe's book on the general election of 1999 comes in handy – although unfortunately it is written in Dutch and not in English. Pompe provides us with a profile of 48 parties which participated in the 1999 election. Among them are most of those which, either under their original name or under a new one, will run in the 2004 election, since parties with less than two per cent of the seats in parliament are barred from participating. *De Indonesische algemene verkiezingen 1999* also discusses the changes in election and political party legislation immediately following the fall of Soeharto, and this too is helpful in judging more recent developments. The political temperature is already heating up, as people say in Indonesia. A kind of follow-up, dealing with changes in electoral legislation and with the political strife within the more important political parties and within the Soekarno family since 1999, would be most welcome.

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Albert G. van Zonneveld, *Traditional weapons of the Indonesian archipelago*. Leiden: Zwartenkot Art Books, 2001, 160 pp. ISBN 9054500042. Price: EUR 65.90 (hardback).

DAVID VAN DUUREN

This book is an ambitious attempt to classify the enormous variety of defensive, offensive and ceremonial weapons of Indonesia. This is, in fact, an almost impossible task. Most of the – very fragmentary – information which is available on the traditional weapons of the archipelago consists of passing comments and brief descriptions in old publications written by all kinds of authors: nineteenth-century travellers and ethnographers, Indologists, military historians, museum curators. In recent times there has also been an increasing number of publications on the subject by fascinated collectors, not to mention the self-appointed 'experts' who have won their own places



in the apparently attractive world of exotic weaponry. Van Zonneveld has managed to unravel this tangle of heterogeneous sources and his inventory is as complete as is possible. *Traditional weapons of the Indonesian archipelago* is an alphabetically ordered survey with hundreds of lemmas and illustrations beginning with the *agang*, a leather shield from western Flores, and ending with the *wedung*, a ceremonial machete from Central Java. However, the information which it contains may also be accessed by using the interesting additional key, which resembles a key to botanical flora. The author's starting point is that the provenance of each unknown sword or knife must be determined, and it must be named. He uses the blade as the criterion for this purpose and begins with a schematic summary of all possible relationships between the edge, back and tip. Using his 75 possible combinations it appears to be quite easy to establish whether the dagger in one's hand is a *rencong* from Aceh or a *sadop* from Kalimantan. Quite an achievement!

I would stress that this is not an anthropological study of traditional Indonesian weapons comparable to recent anthropological studies of traditional Indonesian textiles or architecture. The author has avoided focused research into specific islands, ethnic groups or local cultural traditions. Given the continuing – but nonetheless strange – lack of interest in Indonesian weapons from anthropologists, Van Zonneveld could hardly build on recent work by other authors and consequently had to start at the beginning himself, wading through the obscure descriptions and innumerable spelling changes in his chaotic 'raw material' to discover and classify the weapons and establish their names. This excellent reference book, with its formal and exact descriptions, will appeal first and foremost to those who need to identify the weapons concerned: curators in anthropological museums, weapon collectors, and probably also dealers in ethnographic objects.

My minor criticism is that the book contains no classification of defensive weapons. Although there are fairly extensive general lemmas on shields, helmets and cuirasses, the reader can only find these by leafing right through the book. However, this does not detract from the fact that in this book we have an indispensable encyclopaedia of old Indonesian weapons, most of which are now no longer manufactured. The presentation of the book is its best advertisement: the beautiful, previously unpublished photographs, including real showpieces, of weapons from private collections and from the collection of the Ethnographical Museum in Leiden, as well as the old drawings and field photos, ensure that *Traditional weapons of the Indonesian archipelago* is not just a very useful reference book, but also a feast for the eye.

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Christian Ph. Josef Lehner, 1999, *Die Heiler von Samoa. O Le Fofo; Monographie über die Heiler und die Naturheilmethoden in West-Samoa*. Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 234 pp. [Mensch und Gesellschaft 4.] ISBN 3631311273. Price: EUR 40.00.

PETER VAN EEUWIJK

The central aim of this book is to save the art of healing – especially knowledge of herbal medicines – as it exists among Samoan healers (Fofo), and to preserve it for future scientific research. The author, both a physician and an anthropologist by training, offers a very detailed and lengthy account which describes the local or ‘traditional’ healers in Polynesian Western Samoa. This book contains an almost complete overview in the tradition of ethnomedicine, including: the cultural history of Samoan medicine (Chapter 1), the social profile and the making of healers (Chapter 2), the healers’ concepts of health, illness and the human body (Chapter 3), and the types of diagnosis and treatment which they apply (Chapter 4). An extended glossary of medical terms in the Samoan language, and an index of prominent herbal plants found in Western Samoa, round off the book. All in all this monograph has clearly achieved its primary objective: to document Samoan medicine, the existing literature on which is very poor and mostly of colonial and missionary origin. Among the weaknesses of the book, on the other hand, are that it contains hardly any ethnographic material on the communities and research sites which it describes, and offers no information about the methodological approach followed. A map and some illustrations would also have been very helpful for the interested reader. More importantly, whether the book can be said to have achieved its second stated objective – ‘to preserve Samoan medicine for future scientific research’ – is highly questionable. The author deals with local (medical) knowledge belonging to his primary sources, the local healers, and from this point of view he should seriously have considered the question of intellectual property rights, an extraordinarily sensitive issue in current ethnobotany and ethnomedicine.

Written in the tradition of ethnomedicine, *Die Heiler von Samoa* is mainly descriptive, with few abstract reflections. This is unfortunate because many of the descriptions which it offers, although in themselves detailed and interesting, cry out for theoretical investigation and analysis with reference to contemporary medical anthropology. Among the questions which deserve further discussion are the following. What makes Samoan medicine a medical system and a cultural system? How does Samoan culture as a whole shape ‘traditional’ medicine? Or do only the healers themselves shape it? Can local health care practices in Samoan communities be characterized as comprehensive systems encompassing several sectors (lay, professional, and

folk)? How adaptive is Samoan medicine in response to internal innovations and external influences in a context of medical pluralism?

A further problem with *Die Heiler von Samoa* is that the author implicitly draws on the old dichotomy between 'traditional' and 'modern' medicine. He uses terms such as 'indigenous', 'traditional', 'local', and 'Samoan', counterposing these to 'modern', 'biological', 'Western', 'foreign', and 'European'. Moreover, while Samoan healers are represented as bearers of subjective beliefs and personal ideas, physicians are characterized as adherents of science and possessors of objective knowledge. The use of such contrasts involves the risk of a relapse into an outdated dichotomy and a black-and-white world view which does not correspond with medical reality in Western Samoa.

By focusing on healers as the main bearers of the Samoan medical tradition, Lehner paints a rather static picture of categories and norms. Individual local healers may behave in very different ways with regard to their curative techniques as well as their healing experiences and life stories, but they all refer to the same underlying concepts of health and illness. Their aetiologies (the ways in which they ascribe causes to illnesses) are based with amazing consistency on the concept of disturbed harmony or balance. We may ask, however, whether this concept also reflects normative rules which are adhered to by the majority of Samoans, which regulate their life, and which are produced and reproduced in healer-patient-interactions. Unfortunately, the author does not tell us much about healer-patient interactions or the ways in which different explanatory models are brought into concordance in order to achieve successful healing. It would have been helpful to compare the provider's view (that of the local healers) with the user's perspective (that of their patients). Healers have to deal with their patients' own knowledge of health and illness as this is perceived and shaped in the course of wider social life, renegotiated by the patients' own social reference group during the treatment phase, and finally assessed and evaluated by the same group after treatment. Contemporary medical anthropology views illness as a dynamic social process which includes the healer, the patient, and significant others.

Lehner's narrow focus on healers as bearers of traditional Samoan medicine results in a second weakness from a theoretical point of view. 'Medical pluralism' is a reality in contemporary Samoa, and the Samoan healers are part of it, representing one of several health care systems in Western Samoa. As the author in fact shows, the healers have successfully adapted to new challenges ever since the so-called contact period during which the first Europeans reached the islands. Lehner also mentions in passing that some healers have in recent times adopted Aspirin into their treatments, and that local midwives have been given training in biomedical birth attendance. However, he does not really examine the healers – or their patients – in their

social, economic, political and ecological contexts. What does the capitalization of social relations mean for healer-patient relations? How do healers and patients react to consequences of medical 'globalization' such as the availability of pharmaceuticals in every village kiosk? How do they deal with the fact that the deforestation of the Polynesian islands has resulted in a reduction of biodiversity which affects local pharmacopoeia? To what extent do so-called 'system factors' such as time, money, distance, and the quality of care override cultural factors such as concepts of causality which involve evil spirits, 'bad winds', and supernatural signs? Last but not least, the 'health transition' – that is, demographic and epidemiological changes connected with urbanization, migration, and changes in lifestyle – has already had major effects on all nations in the Asia-Pacific region, including the Polynesian islands. One may assume that Samoan healers, like their counterparts elsewhere, are confronted with rapidly ageing communities, a sharp increase in chronic diseases, altered eating, dressing, working and housing habits, and urbanized societies. Obese young urban Samoans suffering from hypertension and diabetes will die of cardio-vascular illnesses such as heart failure: Will local Samoan healers offer them treatment?

The book is a useful and welcome contribution to research on 'traditional' medicine in Polynesia and in particular on the Samoa islands. The author gives a precise, very detailed, and almost comprehensive description of local healers in Western Samoa, including their social profile, their concepts of health and illness, and their treatments. In this sense, the monograph is an important piece of documentation of Samoan culture. Even though the book lacks theoretical sharpness and has a very narrow focus on healers as health providers, it can be recommended to readers with an interest in Samoan culture and non-European ethnomedicine.

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Frans Hüsken and Dick van der Meij (eds), *Reading Asia; New research of Asian studies*. Richmond: Curzon, 2001, xvi + 338 pp. ISBN 0700713719. Price: GBP 40.00 (hardback).

HANS HÄGERDAL

The International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) is a post-doctoral research institute based in Leiden and Amsterdam. It provides research facilities for fellows from all over the world, in all kinds of disciplines, touching any Asian region and any period of time. Given these exceedingly wide frames the rather disparate character of this volume comes as no surprise. The fellows of the IIAS have been encouraged to provide short articles (around twenty

pages each) about their current research. The editors, Frans Hüsken and Dick van der Meij, seem to have done a fine job of giving the various contributions a uniform layout – anyone with experience of editorial work will know that this is by no means an easy task, especially with many of the fellows moving on to faraway places after their IIAS tenure.

The book under scrutiny is divided in three parts. The first part concerns various political and social issues in present-day Asia. The second deals with historical legacies of the pre-colonial and colonial periods. And the third part contains cultural performance and linguistic and philological analysis. In all, fifteen essays have been included, dealing with South, Southeast and East Asia. Most of the contributors are relatively new and 'upcoming' names, with just a few 'established' scholars (perhaps most notably Leonard Y. Andaya).

When reviewing a collection like this, two questions have to be put forward. First, do the contributions maintain a satisfactory scholarly standard? And second, is the idea of a multifaceted volume right in relation to the intended audience? The answer to the first of these questions can be summarized fairly briefly. Obviously I do not have the scholarly competence to judge all the contributions, but most of them appear to be competently written. Some nevertheless leave a somewhat unfinished impression. H.P. Ray's article on Buddhist pilgrimage as leitmotif in the Indian Ocean area in the ancient period would have benefited from a clearer sense of direction, and some may find that K. Forster's study of economic and social issues in temporary Zhejiang reads more like a report than an analytical discussion. In general I would say that the essays in the social scientific and historical parts of the volume tend to be somewhat empirical in approach, while those on cultural performance and language include some attempts at theorizing.

The second question is more debatable. In their introduction, the editors suggest that 'the panoramic view of Asia' provided by the contributors from various disciplines 'is kaleidoscopic'. Each contribution 'is a miniature text in itself, but together they provide often fascinating insights into the socio-cultural dynamics of Asia' (p. xvi). Nevertheless it must be said that an academic reader with a general interest in Asian cultures will have difficulty digesting the breadth of subjects included. The philological and linguistic contributions in particular might have been better served had they been published elsewhere. The problem here is more acute than in the case of *Festschriften*, most contributors to which, after all, share interests with the object of celebration. Moreover, many of the articles in the volume have the character of rather sharply demarcated bricks of knowledge. It is possible that the volume would have benefited if the fellows had been encouraged to put their studies into a broader geographical or topical context, though I am aware that this is easier said than done. A model here is the excellent article by Andaya on the

seventeenth-century Acehnese model of Malay society, which studies Aceh in a long-term perspective and in its regional context.

On the other hand, the breadth of *Reading Asia* can also be seen, as the editors imply, as a strength. Whatever your field of interest you are likely to pick up useful bits and pieces. Certainly the volume succeeds in illustrating the wide variety of approaches taken up by the upcoming generation of Asia scholars.

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Jelle Miedema, Cecilia Odé, and Rien A.C. Dam (editors, with the assistance of Connie Baak), *Perspectives on the Bird's Head of Irian Jaya, Indonesia; Proceedings of the Conference, Leiden, 13-17 October 1997*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1998, xiii + 982 pp. ISBN 9042006447. Price: EUR 192.00 (hardback).

TERENCE E. HAYS

For New Guinea at least, the now-longstanding pattern of intensive anthropological fieldwork in a single community was arguably inaugurated by Bronislaw Malinowski in the Trobriand Islands (although probably unwittingly, given his necessarily *extensive* approach to understanding the *kula* exchange system practiced there). For most of the twentieth century (unlike the late nineteenth century with, for example, its Cambridge expedition to the Torres Straits) there have been relatively few attempts to focus on *regions*, despite the demonstrable insights to be gained thereby regarding the formation and maintenance of social systems. A notable exception is the Irian Jaya Studies project (ISIR), begun in the early 1990s at the University of Leiden as a priority programme of the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research with generous funding for an extended period (1993-2000).

Under the general leadership of Professor Wim Stokhof and the supervision of Cecilia Odé and Jelle Miedema, ISIR was a massively ambitious project. It was based in Leiden – a logical choice given the source materials and expertise available there, as well as the only Irian Jaya-oriented post-graduate programme in the world and the university's long history of contacts with the Indonesian government, scientific institutions, and universities. The collaborative effort involved was truly international and inter-university as well as interdisciplinary, incorporating scholars in the diverse fields of anthropology, archaeology, botany, demography, development administration, geology, and linguistics. Senior scholars coordinated the different sections of the project, conducting archival and field research themselves and

eventually supervising a number of PhD students in the various disciplines.

Following a stock-taking meeting in 1990 to identify major gaps in our scientific knowledge of Irian Jaya (now Papua), the Bird's Head Peninsula (especially its little-studied coastal areas) was chosen as the focal region, funding was secured, personnel were chosen, and the work began. While preparations were made for the new field research that would be the centre-piece of the programme, previously-published and archival resources were assembled. Many of the latter are now readily available to all of us in the project's Irian Jaya Source Materials (IJSN) series of publications. Fieldwork began for some in 1993 and was mostly completed (by at least 18 major participants) by late 1997. Edited volumes on Bird's Head languages, archaeology, botany, and geology as well as numerous scientific articles had already started to report the results, and 15 volumes of archival sources, wordlists, and oral literature texts had appeared in the IJSN series. It was time for another stock-taking, in this case a five-day conference in Leiden, involving 70 participants, with 42 of the papers now published in the volume under review. With an allocation of slightly more than one word of review text for each page of the book, a general characterization of *Perspectives on the Bird's Head* must of course suffice here rather than a detailed consideration of the individual papers.

The volume reflects the interdisciplinary nature of the programme in its organization of papers (roughly) by disciplines (with the addition of five contributions by historians), and reflects the inter-university and international scope of the programme in that it includes contributions by scholars from ten nations. Most of the main participants in the ISIR project are represented here by papers, augmented with (usually) related studies by researchers dealing with New Guinea societies and regions outside the Bird's Head. The topics covered by the papers are exceedingly diverse and, for the most part, very particularistic, following the specific research interests of the authors. This is commonly the case with conferences, especially interdisciplinary ones, and surely no synthesis of such an enormous project could be expected by 1997. Some authors, however, do provide valuable contextualizing papers (especially those by the historians) and major reviews or summative statements are attempted for Bird's Head languages (by Ger Reesink), flora (M.J.S. Sands et al.), and vertebrate zoogeography (Kenneth P. Aplin). A general review of Irian Jaya prehistory (by Truman Simanjuntak) is also included. The reader who wants an overview of the significance of what we have learned so far about this hitherto relatively neglected region will find these papers especially useful, as they will the six 'keynote' papers invited from distinguished scholars whose expertise generally extends well beyond the Bird's Head. Andrew Strathern addresses the implications of the project's results for comparative studies in New Guinea, and Aprilani Soegiarto provides an overall

discussion of the trials and triumphs of such cooperative ventures, as also does E.K.M. Masinambouw. William A. Foley contributes a general sketch of Papuan languages, Nana Ratman outlines in considerable detail the geology of the Bird's Head, and Matthew Spriggs (like Peter Bellwood in another paper) places the archaeology of the peninsula in its wider Southeast Asian and Pacific contexts.

The ISIR project was unprecedented in its scope. The only other efforts in New Guinea that have come close to its ambitions have been the German interdisciplinary 'Man, culture, and environment in the central mountains of West New Guinea' project of the 1970s and 1980s (in the region of the Mek languages of Irian Jaya), and the earlier (1960s) American 'Micro-Evolution' project focusing on the Kainantu region of the Eastern Highlands of Papua New Guinea. In all three cases, numerous doctoral dissertations, books and papers have extended our knowledge of this part of the world (as does the volume under review) to a degree that has surely repaid the enormous investment of financial and human resources involved. Sadly, these inevitable costs now combine with increasingly complex political relations in the world, as well as with a growing 'anti-scientific' sentiment within anthropology and some other social sciences, to make such models unlikely to generate many successors, at least in the foreseeable future.

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Peter Metcalf, *They lie, we lie; Getting on with anthropology*. London: Routledge, 2002, ix + 155 pp. ISBN 0415262607. Price GBP 12.99 (paperback); ISBN 0415262593, GBP 45.00 (hardback).

MENNO HEKKER

This book is an essay about the problem of 'truth' in anthropology – or put in a more abstract way, the problem of observation and objectivity. In the end, observation depends on the person who observes and is therefore subjective. In principle, therefore, it may be impossible to know any objective reality or 'truth'. This epistemological problem applies in even higher degree to the discipline of anthropology and especially ethnography. The ethnographer can only collect knowledge about a culture through an intermediary, the informant, who again has his own subjectivity.

In *They lie, we lie*, Metcalf aims at providing a response to the 'pervasive epistemological scepticism of our times' (p. 1). In his opinion, postmodernism has a fatal influence on ethnography. The ethnographers' dependence on his informants and their subjectivity should not lead to the assertion that it is fundamentally impossible to know anything or say anything about



another culture, because this would be the end of ethnography. It is necessary, Metcalf argues, to confront the malaise that afflicts the discipline and to 'get on with anthropology'.

Metcalf wants to indicate a way out by analysing the subjectivity of the informant. In doing so he refers to his own fieldwork experiences with a key informant in central northern Borneo, an old woman named Bilo (widow) Kasi. At the beginning of the stories she told in the longhouse, Bilo Kasi used to say, referring to the ancestors: 'they lie, we lie' (as in the title of the book). According to Metcalf this expression shows a skepticism which accords with today's postmodernism – as if she considered traditional knowledge to consist of lies. Yet in other respects her attitude was the opposite of postmodernism. She told the stories exactly as she had heard them herself, and in doing so made herself the mouthpiece of the ancestors and assumed something of their power.

In five chapters entitled respectively *Lies*, *Struggle*, *Power*, *Ethnicity* and *Closure*, Metcalf tries to make his position clear. After introducing the subject in *Lies*, in *Struggle* Metcalf attempts to disentangle the relationship between ethnographer and informant by analysing his own struggle with Bilo Kasi. Unable to obtain data about death rituals from this informant, Metcalf solved the problem by confronting Bilo Kasi with information on the same subject from another source. The chapter on *Power* is dedicated to the influence of power differences – for instance, those resulting from colonialism – upon fieldwork and data collecting via informants. In the chapter on *Ethnicity*, Metcalf analyses the ethnic situation in his fieldwork area in historical perspective, again focusing in particular on the influence of that situation on his key informant Bilo Kasi. Ethnicity appears to have played an important role in Kasi's attitude towards Metcalf as an ethnographer. It must be added, however, that ethnicity is in practice very relative, being the result of a processes of definition by ethnographers and/or their subjects. In this respect anthropologists are, according to Metcalf, caught up in distortions and inventions of culture. In *Closure*, finally, Metcalf presents his final analysis of Bilo Kasi's social and cultural position within her society as an explanation of her initial refusal to provide Metcalf with the data which he desired. In her own way Bilo Kasi, who descended from a social stratum which had practically disappeared from her society, was striving to preserve her own culture according to her own vision. Bilo Kasi, according to Metcalf, was practising a 'discourse of the vanishing' (pp. 86, 117). In addition, Metcalf describes the changes in ethnic identity which have taken place in northern Borneo during the last few decades, and which again have influenced the position of Bilo Kasi as an informant. Having demonstrated the permanent relativity of the informant's position as a consequence of the relativity of culture, Metcalf ends with a statement of the 'impossibility of closure' (p. 135).

*They lie, we lie* is an essay which does not contain a closely reasoned argument and which leaves the reader with an open ending. The way of reasoning is indirect, Metcalf illustrating his opinions by analysing the case of his key informant. Every now and then he intersperses his descriptions with analytical statements, but the larger part of the book is dedicated to essayistic descriptions of societal change in northern Borneo. As a result, readers are left to distil for themselves Metcalf's rather implicit point of view.

Metcalf's answer to postmodern nihilism in ethnography lies in his analysis of the nature of the subjectivity of informants. The position of an informant is a relative one, shaped as it is by social, cultural and historical context. However, the informant may still tell the 'truth' about his culture. Of course this is nothing new: in doing fieldwork, ethnographers have always been aware that the information which an informant presents is influenced by his or her social and cultural background, and that this needs to be taken into account when considering such information. But Metcalf takes this further by suggesting that the subjectivity of informants results from the relativity of their culture. Culture as such is relative and liable to change, so that the object of ethnography is itself relative. Therefore, the ethnographer should accept this relativity and 'get on with anthropology'.

Here Metcalf stops at precisely the point where the real discussion might have begun. Being the 'bearers' of a culture, informants are themselves part of the object which the ethnographer wants to describe. And if this object, this culture, is relative, 'truth' depends on the ethnographer as an observer. Is there really such a thing as a 'culture' or a 'truth', and can either of these really be known and understood? Or is this object, this culture, essentially just an assumption or a projection of the ethnographer? And if so, what would be the nature of the 'truth' which the ethnographer aims to arrive at? This relativity of culture is exactly the problem which ethnographers have to cope with before they can 'get on' with anthropology. And so the discussion is back where it started, or worse, and Metcalf himself seems to corroborate the postmodernist scepticism which he wishes to attack regarding the question of whether it is possible really to know the 'truth' about another 'culture'.

Foong Kin, *Social and behavioural aspects of malaria control; A study among the Murut of Sabah*. Phillips, Maine: Borneo Research Council, 2000, xx + 241 pp. [BRC Occasional Paper 1.] ISBN 1929900007. Price: USD 20.00.

DAVID HENLEY

This is a competent and informative empirical study of malaria and malaria control among the Murut of Tenom District, Sabah, East Malaysia, at the end of the 1980s. It is based on interview data obtained from 418 adult respondents belonging to 240 households distributed over 16 villages selected for their differential exposure to malaria, together with 1,057 blood samples collected from all available members of the same 240 households. Malaria is a serious problem in the Tenom area: 70 percent of the respondents reported having had the disease at least once in their lifetime (p. 102), and 9.3 percent actually had malaria parasites in their blood at the time of testing (p. 76). The nine chapters of the book consist of: a literature review and description of the field of study; a description of the study area and research methodology; an ethnographic account of the Murut with special reference to behaviour in relation to malaria transmission; an epidemiological profile of Tenom District and the study villages in particular; a survey of environmental and socio-economic factors affecting the prevalence of the disease; an account of local knowledge and perceptions regarding malaria; an analysis of the way these factors relate to preventive behaviour; a description of practices related to the treatment of malaria; and a conclusion summarizing the significant findings and empirical implications.

The principal malaria vector in Sabah is the forest-dwelling mosquito *Anopheles balabacensis balabacensis*, and Foong Kin's results show that among the Murut, living or working in or near the forest is 'the most, and only, significant predictor of occurrence of malaria' (pp. 94-5). Although rather typical of contemporary Southeast Asia, this pattern contrasts strikingly with the man-made malaria epidemics recently described by historian Van der Brug for eighteenth century Batavia (Jakarta), where the construction of commercial fishponds created ideal breeding places for the even more dangerous vector *Anopheles sundaicus* (P.H. van der Brug, 1997, 'Malaria in Batavia in the 18th century', *Tropical Medicine and International Health* 2:892-902). Once partly a 'disease of civilization' conjured up when people unintentionally built nurseries for *sundaicus*, or favoured sun-loving vector species like *Anopheles maculatus* by clearing the forest to make way for plantations, today malaria in Southeast Asia has become mainly a disease of the wilderness, affecting swidden farmers and rattan collectors far more than it does town-dwellers or plantation workers.

With regard to the social and behavioural aspects of malaria control which Foong Kin's study aims to highlight, one of its most interesting conclusions is that despite considerable exposure to the scientific explanation for malaria, a high level of ignorance – or perhaps more accurately, scepticism – continues to exist among the Murut with regard to the cause of the disease. Only 45 percent of respondents, for example, believed mosquito bites to be the only possible source of infection, and 35 percent, when questioned on the topic, did not mention mosquitoes at all (pp. 102-3). Yet at the same time, somewhat paradoxically, traditional herbal or magical remedies were seldom resorted to, and modern anti-malarial medicines were much in demand.

One obvious weakness of this study is its failure to bring any of its results up to date. The reader does not learn, for instance, whether two ominous trends observed in Tenom District in the 1980s, a rise in overall malaria incidence and a proportional increase in dangerous *Plasmodium falciparum* (as opposed to *P. vivax*) infections – trends attributed by Foong Kin (p. 73) to increases in forest-related activities and to drug resistance respectively – have since continued. The bibliography too makes a dated impression, containing only eight publications from after 1990. A perhaps more serious problem is that one of the study's main conclusions, that better health education is needed in order to convince the Murut 'that [malaria] prevention is both possible and useful' (p. 199), is itself unconvincing given the seriousness of the obstacles to malaria prevention which are so carefully detailed in the main body of the book. The Murut, Foong Kin admits (pp. 147-8, 198), are correct to dismiss DDT house spraying as ineffective for this purpose, since *Anopheles balabacensis balabacensis* is exophilic – that is, it usually bites outdoors. Nor can the use of prophylactic drugs be recommended on a large scale:

Since people living in forested areas were highly exposed to the vector throughout the year, to recommend that they use chemoprophylaxis is not practical. The adverse effects of consuming a large quantity of antimalarial drugs may be more harmful than beneficial. Furthermore, the chance of malaria parasites developing strong resistance to the drugs is then high, suggesting that chemoprophylaxis should be seriously reconsidered as a control measure. (pp. 198-9.)

Which specific preventive measures, then, could usefully be taught to Murut farmers who must necessarily spend much of their lives in or near the forest? We are not really told, and in fact it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the most realistic hope for malaria prevention in the Tenom area actually lies in a transition to intensive, sedentary agricultural practices and non-agricultural ways of life involving less contact with forest environments. Nor is Foong Kin any more specific about how health education 'could advantageously adapt modern knowledge to the traditional framework of beliefs' (p. 201). Readers unimpressed by the conclusions of this study, on the other

hand, may usefully substitute their own, and the empirical results which it presents will certainly prove valuable to all those interested in the regrettably topical subject of malaria in Southeast Asia.

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Frédéric Mantiennne, *Les relations politiques et commerciales entre la France et la péninsule Indochinoise (XVIIe siècle)*. Paris: Les Indes Savantes, 2001, 395 pp. ISBN 2846540071. Price: EUR 37.00 (paperback).

GERRIT KNAAP

As far as the general public is concerned, French colonialism is mainly known to have taken place in Africa. In the Asian arena the French played a minor role, during the nineteenth century establishing a true colony only in French Indochina (present-day Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos). However, much earlier the French had already plunged themselves into the scramble for an empire overseas. In the eighteenth century, during the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), they fought bitterly with the English for dominance in India and in North America. And earlier still, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the French had not been exempt from colonial ambitions. The present study by Frédéric Mantiennne deals with some of these early ambitions, directed towards Indochina – a term used here in a broad sense to include all the countries of mainland Southeast Asia.

The book consists essentially of three parts, dealing respectively with: 1. the efforts of the French to obtain footholds in Asia in general before about 1665; 2. their dealings with Siam between about 1665 and 1700 (actually the backbone of the book); and 3. French involvement or non-involvement in other countries in Indochina from roughly 1665 onward. Mantiennne makes extensive use of archival material, including the Fonds des Colonies of the Archives Nationales, the Département des Manuscrits of the Bibliothèque Nationale, and last but not least, the archives of the Société des Missions Étrangères de Paris. In this respect, the book offers original research. A further new dimension is added by the fact that Mantiennne places the effort to gain influence in Asia within the context of internal French power struggles. Besides archival sources, wide use is also made of published material – not only about the French, but also about the other Europeans active on the Asian scene, in particular the Portuguese (the Estado da India Oriental), the Dutch (VOC), and the English (EIC). Consequently, French activities are placed here in a wider context. Mantiennne accomplishes this contextualization quite successfully.

Because of the wars of religion and subsequent civil wars, the French record in Asia was rather meagre until the second part of the seventeenth century – that is, the period of Louis XIV and his great ministers Nicolas Fouquet, Jean-Baptiste Colbert, and the latter's son Jean-Baptiste Antoine Colbert, usually known as the Marquis de Seignelay. Both Colberts were in fact promoters and sponsors of the commercial interests stimulating the French expansion in Asia. These interests consisted essentially of the *Compagnie des Indes Orientales* (CIO), which after an initial failure was re-established by Colbert the elder in 1664. At first the CIO was predominantly a Huguenot affair, with a former VOC employee, François Caron, playing a significant role: as a matter of fact, the VOC was the great example which the CIO strove to emulate.

Approximately ten years before the re-establishment of the CIO, on his return from Asia, Father Alexandre de Rhodes started to propagate the Roman Catholic mission to Southeast Asia in France. As a result French missionary efforts, the *Mission Étrangère*, were centralized around a seminary in Paris. Once in Asia, however, the French missionaries met a great deal of hostility on the part of their Portuguese brethren, who saw them as intruders from a foreign European nation. Franco-Portuguese rivalry was also present in the sphere of the religious orders, where the French were mainly Capucins and the Portuguese mainly Jesuits. At first, the Catholic lobby in France tried to establish a company of its own to trade with Asia in order to provide enthusiastic French fathers with a safe passage to their fields of mission. When this initiative failed, the *Mission Étrangère* tried to hitch itself to the CIO in order to get itself established in Asia. In this it gradually succeeded. First, the Catholics worked the Huguenots out of the CIO and had it appoint Catholic chaplains to look after the spiritual well-being of its personnel. In 1685, the year of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the CIO statutes included the promotion of the Roman Catholic religion by means of trade as an explicit goal.

And then there was Siam with its splendid capital, Ayutthaya. A study of the Franco-Siamese connection forms the second part of Mantienné's book. Foreign relations in early-modern Siam, in political as well as commercial terms, appeared to be firmly under the control of the court. The main European partner of Siam was the VOC, which exported such wares as deerskins to Japan. With the fall of Banten in Java to the VOC in 1682, however, certain groups at the Siamese court played on the (largely unjustified) fear that a fate like that of Banten might also befall Siam. Among those who feared the Dutch was the strongman in charge of foreign relations, the Greek adventurer Constantin Phaulkon. By this stage, French missionaries had been present in Siam for about twenty years. They were well received by the court,

and some missionaries even believed that King Narai could be converted. The CIO also traded in Siam, but with little success.

In 1684 and 1685, the court of Ayutthaya sent envoys to France. From this year onward the commercial and religious elements in Franco-Siamese relations were supplemented by more purely political objectives. The main object of the first French embassy to Ayutthaya, in 1685, was still the conversion of King Narai, in which respect it failed miserably. After this, Phaulkon advised the French to concentrate on the conversion of the common people rather than on that of the king. He also kept alive the interest of the court at Versailles in Siamese affairs by using a French Jesuit missionary to win Father François de la Chaise over to the cause. De la Chaise was Louis XIV's personal confessor. Phaulkon, who as a foreigner had only a small power base in Siam, was playing the French card here in order to strengthen his own position. Consequently, in 1687 the French sent a more spectacular embassy, six ships and 1,300 men strong. Now the French no longer desired only to trade and to maintain good diplomatic relations; they were also on the lookout for a new headquarters in Asia. Bangkok, at the mouth of Siam's main river, was one of the places they had in mind.

Once the French had been allowed to disembark in Bangkok, however, the garrison was obliged to swear an oath of allegiance to King Narai and Phaulkon. Nothing came of the plan to establish a true French headquarters. Soon afterwards a usurper, Pethracha, staged a coup in Ayutthaya, arrested and executed Phaulkon, and was crowned king after the death of the old Narai. The new Siamese regime considered the French and their garrison to be part of Phaulkon's system, and forced them to evacuate Bangkok. The rapidly diminishing number of French soldiers gradually retreated to Pondichéry in India. There they were not able to prevent the fall of this stronghold, five years later in 1693, to the Dutch, who attacked French positions in Asia as part of the Nine Years' War (1688-1697).

Part Three of the book is devoted to the other countries of mainland Southeast Asia: Tonkin, Cochinchina, Cambodia and Burma. Among these countries it was only in Tonkin that the French had a substantial presence, in the sense that a few missionaries succeeded in nurturing the fiction that they were there as agents of the CIO. Most of the time foreign missionaries were forbidden to pursue their work in Tonkin. After the fascinating story of Franco-Siamese relations in the seventeenth century, that of the virtually non-existent relations with these other countries comes as an anticlimax.

All in all, then, early French efforts in Indochina ended in failure and disaster. Besides painting a vivid picture of that disaster, Mantienné also provides a meticulous analysis of the reasons for it. Principle among these, he correctly points out, was the pre-eminence of religious and political considerations in French decision-making, to the extent that French commercial interests were

undermined. The CIO found itself obliged to assist the French cause in areas which were hardly interesting from the point of view of profitable trade, and the many wars of Louis XIV made the company doubly vulnerable. The mixture of political, religious and economic motives which characterized French efforts in Asia was much closer to the Portuguese model than to that of the successful northern Europeans with their VOC and EIC.

In conclusion, Mantienné has made a fresh analysis of an interesting story. However, in order to hold the attention of the reader he would have done better to stop at the end of Part Two – that is, with the retreat from Siam. With the possible exception of Tonkin, French relations with the other countries covered in the last part of the book could better have been described in separate articles.

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James T. Collins, *Malay, world language; A short history*. Second edition. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 2000, xii + 101 pp. ISBN 983626034. Price: MYR 10.00.

ULI KOZOK

Collin's *Malay, world language* is a well-written, much needed resource on the history of the Malay language. Despite its shortness it contains a wealth of information on the 1300-year history of Malay from the earliest inscriptions to its development as a modern language, which now enjoys the status of the national language of four Southeast Asian nations.

Considering the small size of this book, it has a fairly large bibliography and a comprehensive index of about five pages each. Including the three tables and 31 illustrations, the book actually consists of not more than 50 pages of text. These are divided into five chapters of which Chapter 3 is the largest with 23 pages, while each of the other four chapters has a page count between three and nine pages. This rather unbalanced equilibrium is further distorted by the fact that the most voluminous chapter covers a period of 100 years, while all other chapters, excluding the final chapter, cover periods of at least 250 years each. In the preface to his work the author cautions that this book is a 'hurried and inadequate essay'. This is partly a polite understatement in the Malay tradition, but it also alerts the reader to the fact that this book, with its limited size, cannot provide much more than a few snippets of the history of the Malay language.

The book reviewed here is the second printing of the second edition. It is, however, labelled as the first printing of the second edition. The second printing is virtually identical to the first, which was published in 1998, with



the only differences being that in the 2000 printing, illustrations 1 and 16 are no longer upside down and all of the illustrations are printed in black and white instead of colour.

The five chapters of this book are diachronically arranged and each cover one of the five periods of the Malay language according to the author's own periodization. Chapter 1, *Surveying the prehistory of Malay*, provides a brief outline of the spread of the Austronesian languages with an emphasis on the development of Proto-Malay, which according to the author has its ultimate origin in western Borneo, a theory that is supported by linguistic evidence provided by Adelaar and Nothofer. Chapter 2, *Early Malay*, covers almost 1,000 years in only nine pages of text (plus tables and illustrations). Not only did the language change considerably from the earliest inscription (dated AD 682) to the sixteenth century, which marks the era of the European 'discovery' of the Malay language, but it was also written in a number of different scripts. The oldest inscriptions are all in the southern Indian Palawa script, which gradually developed into the Old Javanese script. Beginning in the fourteenth century, this script was progressively replaced by the Arabic Malay script. Before this, another orthographic change occurred when 'vernacular writing systems based on Indian orthography' emerged in Sumatra and the Philippines. Unfortunately the author pays little attention to these writing systems, which for the first time provided the local languages with a simplified writing system perfectly adapted to their individual sound systems. The nature of early Malay literacy is certainly too complex to be covered adequately in a chapter of only a few pages.

According to the author, the sixteenth century was a 'transitional period, which led to substantial changes in the status, functions, and structures of Malay'. Chapter 3, *Early Modern Malay*, commences in the seventeenth century when the 'Latin of the archipelago' became the pre-eminent language of scholarship, commerce, diplomacy and religion in the 'Age of Commerce', which was also the period of contact with European nation-states. While Malay language and culture became more and more associated with Muslim identity in Southeast Asia, Malay also became the language of Christian missions and an important tool for colonial expansion and consolidation. This was also the 'century of [...] appropriation of Malay', when the language underwent considerable changes through the introduction of a large number of European loan words and European-induced structural changes. Malay expanded through absorption of other ethnic groups and through the replacement of local languages. At the same time Malay literature flourished in the seventeenth century – not only in the belles-lettres but also in the writing of letters, theological treatises, historical chronicles, and contractual agreements. Jawi was still the script most frequently used. Most texts were chirographically produced, but some texts, usually written by Europeans,

appeared in the Roman script, and an increasing number of texts were printed. Supported by the introduction of a basic educational system, the print medium allowed for a much wider circulation of texts.

Chapter 4, *Late Modern Malay*, covers the period from the eighteenth century up to 1945, in which the colonial world in the archipelago was rearranged into two separate spheres of Dutch and English influence over the Malay language. These changes resulted in the present pattern of Indonesian and Malaysian Malay. In the period following the disintegration of the VOC, literary activities declined in accordance with the economic recession. The nineteenth and early twentieth centuries generally saw a comeback of Malay literature supported by the emergence of Malay newspapers, Chinese and Eurasian literature in Malay, and the colonial publishing house Balai Pustaka. Despite the flood of printed material, power and equality were denied to speakers of Malay, the language engine that powered the colonies. The Malay language was finally renamed the Indonesian language in the Youth Oath of 28 October 1928, creating a new deracinated ethnic identity. The Japanese invasion in 1942 increased the political bargaining power of Malay as an Indonesian-based school system was introduced and the Malay language became both a tool and a symbol of nationalism. Chapter 5, *Postcolonial Malay*, emphasizes the importance of Malay as a political tool in the struggle for independence and the formative period of nationalism, as well as the unprecedented growth of the language in postcolonial times. The two sibling languages are now spoken by approximately 200 million people as a first or fluent second language, while the importance of regional languages, such as Javanese, is in decline.

This small book is fun to read and should be compulsory reading for the more than 100,000 foreign students currently studying the Indonesian-Malay language. Unfortunately, however, this is unlikely to happen given that the book is published by the Malaysian Institute for Language and Literature, has a limited circulation, is currently out of print, and is difficult to obtain, even from libraries that are normally well stocked with books featuring an Indonesian-Malay focus.

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Narifumi Maeda Tachimoto, *The Orang Hulu; A report on Malaysian Orang Asli in the 1960's*. [A.S. Baer, ed.] Subang Jaya, Malaysia: Centre for Orang Asli Concerns, 2001, xiv + 104 pp. ISBN 9834004214 (paperback). Price: USD 9.71.

Hoe Ban Seng, *Semalai communities at Tasek Bera; A study of the structure of an Orang Asli society*. [A.S. Baer and R. Gianno, eds.] Subang Jaya, Malaysia: Centre for Orang Asli Concerns, 2001, xii + 191 pp. ISBN 9834004230 (paperback). Price: USD 13.54.

NATHAN PORATH

These two books were originally written in the early 1960s, immediately following the Emergency period in Malaysia – a period which had major socio-cultural effects on all the Orang Asli communities of the Malay peninsula. Both books are prefaced with a short editor's introduction advising the reader to treat the books as historical documents relating to the ways of life of the two communities as they existed in the 1960s. Within this context, it is a shame that the editors or authors did not provide more information on the two communities as they exist today.

The two books are descriptive in style and are theoretically influenced by the writings of Malinowski. They present the data in a way that may seem old fashioned to the present day reader. For example, Ban Seng's book divides its data into chapters with titles like: *Traditional authority and leadership; Patterns of economic activity; The basic social structure; Customs and belief; Language; Culture; Social change and assimilation*. In the chapter on language he gives a short word list. In the chapter on culture he provides data that could equally have been incorporated in the chapter on 'customs and belief'. The book follows the 'tradition versus social change' format that was customary in some writings of its time. However, all the chapters leading up to the one on social change do also themselves provide clear hints of the changing 'ethnographic present' experienced by the author during his fieldwork. Some of the data also suggest that the so-called 'traditional society' of the earlier pre-Emergency period as described here was not in fact all that traditional after all, being likewise a product of political and cultural transformations. It is therefore a shame that Ban Seng did not incorporate the data which he presents in the last chapter into his overall ethnographic image of the Semalai. There are places in this book where one receives the impression that the author's ulterior motive is to contribute to the development policies of the day. One can imagine that both this book and Maeda Tachimoto's were used by local authorities to understand and administer the Orang Asli communities which they describe. These are also the type of books that the

respective communities can easily use today for the purpose of reinventing 'traditional culture'. The editors point out in the preface that these books are published for the Orang Asli communities themselves as much as for the sake of Orang Asli academic studies.

Although Ban Seng's book is longer and more ethnographically detailed than Maeda Tachimoto's report, I feel that the latter is easier to read and has more theoretical relevance to modern Orang Asli studies. Because it is mainly an economic description of the Orang Hulu, this ethnography does reflect some of the transformations which the communities were experiencing at the time of fieldwork. To present an image of a traditional society, Maeda Tachimoto uses some colonial quotations but does not treat these as referring directly to the changing ethnographic present. It would be interesting to explore some of the data on economic transactions in the light of theoretical debates on generalized reciprocity and sharing. Although the author describes the various economic strategies that the Orang Hulu pursued in the 1960s, he occasionally seems to treat the collection of forest produce as if it were a novel pursuit. This book does give minimal but nevertheless interesting data and insights regarding the historical relations between the Orang Asli community and Malays. Unfortunately the author did not explore this theme further.

Both books provide relatively detailed and valuable descriptions of the role of the *batin* (headman) in indigenous Malay societies. Although they point out that the office of *batin* was related to the structure of the Malay kingdom, they seem to take it for granted that the functions and customs associated with this office were 'traditional' phenomena rather than products of, or even 'leftovers' from, local Malay systems of royal administration. While it is also made clear that the role of the headman was changing under new political circumstances, his historical relationships with the Orang Asli community and the Malay kingdom are not fully explored.

Both of the books under review here present ethnographic data that is also relevant to a comparative understanding of the Malay dialect-speaking indigenous communities living on the other side of the Straits of Malacca in Sumatra. Having worked myself with one such community in Riau, I was struck by the ethnographic similarities of both the Orang Hulu and the Semalai to the Orang Sakai – and, we might add by extension, to the Orang Bonai, Talang Mamak, Patalangan, and others. What this suggests is that all these groups, which today are ethnically defined by exonyms and which for more than a hundred years have been affected by different colonial and national political cultures, are variants of the same indigenous socio-cultural Malay pool. The similarities between the groups on both sides of the Straits take us back to a pre-Pangkor Malay civilization transcending modern national borders.

*The Orang Hulu and Semalai communities at Tasek Bera* serve as contributions to our understanding of historical Malay identities and social formations. They can help students of Malay identity formation in developing a better understanding of the development of social identities in this part of the world. They suggest, I believe, that we should view Malaydom (the *Alam Melayu*) not through an ethnic or linguistic lens, but rather as the product of a civilisational process which also brought into the Malay orbit Austroasiatic-speaking indigenous peoples such as the various Senoi and Meniq groups.

Parts of Maeda Tachimoto's book were originally published, while Ban Seng's remained an unpublished manuscript. Although authors working on Orang Asli communities have quoted the original publications and manuscripts over the years, these two publications are still most welcome in Orang Asli studies, and should be welcome in Peninsula and Sumatran Malay studies too.

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Raechelle Rubinstein and Linda H. Connor (eds), 1999, *Staying local in the global village; Bali in the twentieth century*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999, xiii + 353 pp. ISBN 0824821173. Price: USD 47.00 (hardback).

MARTIN RAMSTEDT

Containing revised and updated versions of nine papers originally presented (by both Balinese and non-Balinese scholars) at the Third International Bali Studies Workshop at the University of Sydney on 3-7 July 1995, *Staying local in the global village* has been competently edited by Raechelle Rubinstein and Linda H. Connor. The overall theme of the workshop, which was convened by the editors in cooperation with Peter Worsley and Adrian Vickers, was 'Bali in the late twentieth century: global communications, national identity, and local connections'. Although initially neither the convenors nor the participants conceived of the possibility of Suharto's imminent downfall, the updated contributions to the resulting book do touch upon the subsequent developments that took place in connection with the demise of the Suharto regime in May 1998. Some of the issues discussed in the book are poignantly illustrated by cartoons from the quill of two Balinese cartoonists, Jango Pramatha and Surya Dharma, as well as by photographs taken by the authors and others. The book also features a detailed glossary and an elaborate index, rendering the generally well researched and carefully argued contents more accessible to people relatively unfamiliar with the field of Balinese studies.

The first chapter consists of Michel Picard's analysis of *The discourse of Kebalian: trans-cultural constructions of Balinese identity*. It deftly contests Balinese notions of Balinese identity as a primordial one consisting of a certain (reified) culture and a localized form of 'Hinduism'. Picard argues that contemporary Balinese identity (*kebalian*) has evolved through a process of 'semantic borrowing and conceptual recasting' which has taken place in response to the colonization, the Indonesianization, and the touristification of the island. To illustrate this semantic borrowing and conceptual recasting of terms imposed by 'outside forces' such as colonial administrators and missionaries, Picard concentrates on the content analysis of a number of journals published in Bali during the 1920s and 1930s by Balinese intellectuals who explicitly addressed issues such as 'religion', 'tradition', and 'culture'.

The second chapter is dedicated to *Making local history in New Order Bali: public culture and the politics of the past*, an issue brilliantly expounded by Margaret J. Wiener. She discusses how during the New Order period, references to the colonial conquest of Bali (specifically, the *puputan* of Badung and Klungkung and the defeat of I Gusti Ngurah Rai's guerilla troops at Margarana) were articulated in such a way that they favoured the interests of the political elite. Wiener thereby presents an illustrative example of intentional cultural production at the intersection of globalization and state formation in post-independent Indonesia. In the third chapter, Putu Suasta and Linda H. Connor describe recent Balinese movements attesting to *Democratic mobilization and political authoritarianism: tourism developments in Bali*. From 1993 onwards, several mass movements protested against the construction of desecrating tourist facilities and against measures taken by the Suharto-regime to neutralize Megawati's political power. The authors discuss the trajectory of these protest movements in the light of the economic and political crisis that erupted in late 1997, and which eventually led to the downfall of Suharto.

In the fourth chapter, *Acting local, thinking local in a Balinese tourist town*, Graeme MacRae elucidates the manner in which the traditional elite of the town of Ubud in Central Bali has successfully combined entrepreneurship in the tourist industry with traditional ways of enlarging its symbolical capital. The former ruling family of Ubud thereby re-established its interpretative monopoly with respect to most cultural and religious affairs in a region heavily dependent on cultural tourism. In the process it skilfully applied the principle of 'acting local, thinking global', a slogan originally coined by Japanese managers. Thomas Reuter's *People of the mountains, people of the sea: negotiating the local and the foreign in Bali*, the fifth chapter, shows how the people commonly referred to as the Bali Aga have been drawing boundaries between the 'local' and the 'foreign' in their contact with the majority of the Balinese who trace their descent to Majapahitan ancestors. Reuter also highlights the

continual attempts of the latter, who dominate local government institutions, to marginalize the former.

I Gde Pitana's *Status struggles and the priesthood in contemporary Bali*, the sixth chapter, describes the religious emancipation of certain descent groups and their priests from the domination of the traditional *brahmana* priests. Although the seeds of this emancipation were already planted in the colonial era, the decisive developments were facilitated by the integration of Bali into the Indonesian nation-state with its policies of religious democratization and modernization. The seventh chapter comprises Ayami Nakatani's paper '*Eating threads: brocades as cash crop for weaving mothers and daughters in Bali*'. It highlights the 'interplay of economic and social forces in both local and regional developments' with regard to Bali's small-scale weaving industry, specifically the production of *songket*. In the eighth chapter, Brett Hough analyses the role of the College of Indonesian Arts in Denpasar under the title *Education for the performing arts: contesting and mediating identity in contemporary Bali*. He examines the 'nexus between the local and the national' by showing how the college contributes to the contemporary recreation of Balinese identity as an integral part of the national Indonesian identity.

Mark Hobart's *The end of the world news: articulating television in Bali*, the ninth chapter, recalls a conversation between Hobart and some Balinese companions that turned out to be 'at once a diagnosis of the terminal condition of contemporary society and a premonition of impending catastrophe'. That premonition seems – with hindsight – to have come true given the turmoil following the demise of Suharto. Hobart's intriguing analysis of the conversation in question shows how television was an important influence on the sociopolitical views of his Balinese friends, whose feeling that a catastrophe would strike Indonesia was inspired by global problems as presented daily on the television news.

The contributors to *Staying local in the global village* have succeeded in conveying complex and dynamic images of Bali which represent a clear break with the habitual 'othering' of the island as either an exotic, unchanging, highly aesthetic paradise, or a corrupt tourist destination where even the most sacred aspects of the local culture are commercialized. They approach the localizing as well as the globalizing processes taking place in Bali from a multi-dimensional perspective. Yet because their analyses are still predominantly focused on Bali itself, they have not quite succeeded in redirecting and broadening what George Aditjondro, keynote speaker at the 1995 workshop, called the 'inward-looking gaze which has been characterising Balinese studies in general and which has blinded observers to the broad critical and comparative perspectives'.

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Thomas R. Leinbach and Richard Ulack (eds), *Southeast Asia: diversity and development*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2000, xiii + 594 pp. ISBN 0138251260. Price: USD 80.00 (hardback).

ALBERT M. SALAMANCA

Students of Southeast Asia will welcome this volume with enthusiasm, as it attempts to provide a comprehensive background to the region and its dilemmas. Written largely by geographers who have keenly observed the rhythms and dynamics of the lives of Southeast Asian people and the richness of their environment, this volume offers a textured and well-researched introduction to a vast and dynamic region. The chapters cover the many facets of the region's diversity and development, from its unique physical characteristics to its colourful historical, social, cultural and political features. *Southeast Asia: diversity and development* has chapters on population change, economic development, urbanization, tourism, industrialization, trade, transport, the role of the state, and gender. The rendition of these subjects is lively and thought-provoking. The unique issues confronting each country in the region are also highlighted in individual country chapters. The approach is informed by relevant literatures across various disciplines, and written in a manner that is easily digestible even to the less academically inclined.

Three small limitations, nevertheless, need to be noted. The first of these relates to fisheries, a field of economic activity which is characteristic of insular or archipelagic Southeast Asia. Although diversity is the main theme of the volume, fisheries, whether marine or freshwater, are not considered a salient issue to the same extent as are forestry and agriculture. In this part of the world, fish and other aquatic resources are arguably as important as the agricultural crops more extensively covered in the book; certainly the consumption of fishery products is much higher in Southeast Asia than in most other parts of the world. Neither do the authors of this volume appear to have consulted studies available during the period of writing – for instance, D.G. Bryant, L. Burke, J. McManus and M. Spalding, 1998, *Reefs at risk: A map-based indicator of threats to the world's coral reefs* (Washington, DC: World Resources Institute) – which show that due to factors such as rapid population growth, destructive fishing practices and poor governance, Southeast Asia's coral reefs are among the most threatened in the world.

A second weakness of this book is its coverage of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, which are treated for many purposes as a single unit and receive no separate country chapters. Instead, these countries are lumped together as if their socialist histories and their poverty are the only important characteristics they possess. Within this trinational unit, moreover, coverage is



uneven. Vietnam receives by far the greatest attention, giving the impression that Laos and Cambodia do not offer sufficient (hi)stories of their own to fill separate chapters. The way in which the 'Indochinese' chapter is written, indeed, gives the reader the feeling that the histories of these countries are appendages, if not footnotes, to that of Vietnam. Such treatment would only have been acceptable had other countries in the region not been given distinct and separate coverage in the volume, which is true only in the case of tiny Brunei. The existence of some convergences between the histories and situations of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia is an insufficient excuse for denying them the separate coverage they deserve given their dramatic and unique histories and trajectories of development.

Finally, it appears that some events and dynamics in the development of the countries in the region, as reflected in the materials used, are not so recent. Perhaps this has much to do with the peculiarities of the publishing enterprise, in which it takes a significant amount of time, from conception through writing, publication, and finally distribution, to get a product like this one out to its readers.

The editors, to their credit, have managed to assemble reputable students of Southeast Asia to write the chapters, and *Southeast Asia: diversity and development* provides a meaningful and comprehensive introduction to the uniqueness of the region and the issues with which it is confronted.

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Muhamad Hisyam, *Caught between three fires; The Javanese pangulu under the Dutch colonial administration, 1882-1942*. Jakarta: Indonesian-Netherlands Cooperation in Islamic Studies (INIS), 2001, 331 pp. [Seri INIS 37.] ISBN 9798116593. Price: EUR 10.00 (paperback).

HEATHER SUTHERLAND

Colonial governments in Islamic countries were confronted by fundamental dilemmas. Their own, Western societies were usually secular, and often imbued with a strong suspicion of Islam. The areas they had colonized, whether in the Middle East, Asia or Africa, were still involved in an on-going process of Islamization, as the complex interaction between faith, established custom and institutions continued to unfold as it had through earlier centuries of evolution. During the later part of the nineteenth century there was an intensification of Muslim religious life in much of Southeast Asia, with an expansion of participation in the hajj, increased immigration from the Hadhramaut, and, in some areas, exposure to Wahabi ideals. At the same

time, in Java, the Dutch colonial state was being consolidated, with increasing bureaucratization. This valuable study by Muhamad Hisyam explores the dilemma of the *pangulu*, the official responsible for religious courts and the administration of Islam. The *pangulu* was, as the title makes clear, subject to demands from three sides: they had their obligation to God, to the colonial regime that appointed them, and to the Muslim community or *umma*.

This book is primarily an institutional study and leaves the question of God out of the equation, focusing on the *pangulu*'s problems in negotiating between the often-conflicting expectations of the Javanese and the Dutch. There are four major chapters. Chapter II (36 pp.) is essentially a historical introduction, reviewing *The making of the pangulu and the structure of its officialdom*. This chapter describes changing religious, administrative, legal and educational institutions, culminating in the official incorporation of the Islamic courts into the colonial administration with the creation of the Priesterraad or Raad Agama in 1882. The following chapter, of about forty pages, considers the relationship between the *pangulu* and the Dutch, and includes interesting information on their *santri-priyayi* lifestyle, which reflected their ambiguous position as both religious leaders and colonial officials. Chapter III also discusses the critical reaction of the *pangulu* to the growing influence of Dutch conceptions of *adat* law in the 1920s and 1930s. Chapter IV, *The conflicting roles of the pangulu* (about 60 pages) explores how these Muslim officials cared for their constituency through education, the administration of alms (*zakat* and *fitrah*), and how they tried to curb missionary influence. Their primary goals were to maintain their position, and to help improve conditions and modernize institutions in the interests of the *umma*. However, as Chapter V makes clear, in the course of the first half of the twentieth century they were to face increasing challenges to their role as spokesmen and protectors as new Islamic organisations claimed the right to represent the people. In his account of *The pangulu and the modernist Muslim movements: the problem of authority* (again around 60 pages), Muhamad Hisyam traces the emergence of Sarekat Islam, Muhammadiyah, and Nahdatul Ulama, and demonstrates how this led to a marginalization of the *pangulu*.

In many ways the *pangulu* were confronted by the same impossible dilemma as the Javanese administrative officials. They were brought into the colonial system because their knowledge and authority were necessary to Dutch control, but the very fact of their incorporation, and partial acculturation, rendered them increasingly vulnerable to charges of betrayal. Harry J. Benda, in his classic *The crescent and the rising sun* (1958), concluded that there were four main reasons why the *pangulu* in Java lost authority. The collegiate nature of the Priesterraad was an innovation and the judicial competence of the *pangulu* councils was vague and limited, while nepotism and corruption became common. This last factor, combined with the lack of any appeals

procedure and the power which the courts had over the lives of ordinary Muslims, led to popular disillusionment. Benda attempts to embed his comments in both a judicial and a moral context. However, in his chapters on the conflicting roles of the *panghulu* and their loss of leadership, Mohamad Hisyam's emphasis is on political organizations and education. He does not follow through the focus on their judicial role to which he allocates a large part of his historical introduction. He does discuss the temptations involved in *zakat* collection and distribution (p. 117), but does not explore the corruption issue further when considering the competition for popular representation between the modern mass organisations and the *pangulu*. Similarly, in his discussion of the reaction of the *ulama* to the spokesman role of the *pangulu* (pp. 97-101), we get little sense of an alternative moral community which had its own criteria against which the performance of the *pangulu* could be judged. Because of the author's decision to leave the 'fire' of God out of his story, the religious dimension is lacking. A deeper consideration of other leadership roles within Muslim Java, looking for example at the role of *tarekat*, would have enriched his analysis.

In *Caught between three fires*, Muhamad Hisyam makes extensive use of material from Dutch archives, held in The Hague and Jakarta, as well as newspapers. He also transcends the conventional division between the government agencies and the Principalities, and discusses the whole of Java. He has compiled a useful list of *pangulu* in Java from the *Regeeringsalmanak* (1880-1928) and, making extensive use of interviews with family members, has added the biographies of two *pangulu* in an appendix. These are Mas Hadji Ichsan, who established an 'Arabic School' in Banjarnegara before the First World War, and K.H.R. Mohammad Adnan, born in 1889 to a Surakarta *pangulu* family. This additional information, and the anecdotal evidence in the book, helps give a human dimension to the account. Anyone interested in Dutch rule in Indonesia, the evolution of Javanese Islam, or the development of Indonesian nationalism, will find much to appreciate in this rich book. Whoever undertakes the long overdue task of writing a history of Islam in twentieth century Java, or in any of its regions, will also be very grateful to Muhamad Hisyam's hard work.

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Roderich Ptak, *China's seaborne trade with South and Southeast Asia (1200-1750)*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999, xii + 366 pp. [Variorum Collected Studies Series CS638.] ISBN 0860787761. Price: GBP 62.50 (hardback).

HEATHER SUTHERLAND

Ashgate publishers have earned the gratitude of libraries and scholars throughout the world with their Variorum reprint series. Established in 1970, with an emphasis on medieval studies, they have now issued well over seven hundred volumes, with a growing list on Islamic and Asian history. Their 'Expanding World' series is a relatively easy way for any new library to obtain a collection of indispensable articles on themes connected to 'European expansion', essays chosen by scholars with a mastery of the literature in their field. The articles are simply reproduced with the original fonts and pagination, as first issued. From the aesthetic point of view, and for citation, this is a clumsy solution, but a minor flaw easily overlooked when compared with the convenience of obtaining access to seminal pieces which would otherwise be difficult, and sometimes impossible, to obtain. In addition to these thematic volumes, the Variorum series also includes collections of selected writings by individual authors. This is Ashgate's second book of essays by Roderich Ptak, professor of Asian studies in Munich; in 1998 his *China and the Asian seas* was already issued in the same series.

Ptak is a specialist in the history of Chinese trade, and through his collaboration with scholars like the late Denys Lombard and Dieter Rothermund he has been responsible for helping to set the agenda for recent work on Asian maritime commerce before 1750. The book under review is divided into two sections. The first, *Geography, routes and regions*, contains six essays: 'Some references to Timor in old Chinese records' (1983), 'Kurze Zusammenfassung der wichtigsten chinesischen Nachrichten zu den Sulu-Inseln während der Ming-Zeit' (1986), 'The northern trade route to the Spice Islands: South China Sea – Sulu Zone – North Moluccas, (14th to early 16th century)' (1992), 'Die Andamanen und Nikobaren nach chinesischen Quellen (Ende Sung bis Ming)' (1990), 'Yuan and early Ming notices on the Kayal area in South India' (1993), and 'The Maldive and Laccadive islands (Liu Shan) in Ming records' (1987).

Section Two, entitled *Commodities: terminology, production, uses, trade*, is more extensive, comprising eight articles. These are: 'The transportation of sandalwood from Timor to China and Macao, c.1350-1600' (1987); 'Notes on the word "Shanhu" and Chinese coral imports from maritime Asia, c. 1250-1600' (1990); 'Pferde auf See: Ein vergessener Aspekt des maritimen chinesischen Handel im frühen 15. Jahrhundert' (1990); 'China and the trade in

tortoise-shell (Sung to Ming periods)' (1991); 'Ebenholz in China: Termini, Verwendung, Einfuhr (ca. 1200-1600)' (1990); 'China and the trade in cloves, circa 960-1435' (1993); 'Asian trade in cloves circa 1500: quantities and trade routes – a synopsis of Portuguese and other sources' (1995); and 'Die Rolle der Chinesen, Portugiesen und Holländer im Teehandel zwischen China und Südostasien (ca.1600-1750)' (1994).

Commenting on this second section, Ptak writes in his brief introduction to the collection that 'examining seemingly trivial matters can at times broaden our knowledge of maritime and trade history'. He is defending himself against possible reproach, since he discusses commodities which, he thinks, 'economic historians would usually rate of secondary importance' (p. x). I think he is being unnecessarily defensive. Although Indian textiles, pepper and porcelain might have been the dominant products traded across the South China Sea and the Bay of Bengal, some of the exotics he describes, like cloves or ebony, were important to the integration of certain areas into the world market. Trade in such apparently peripheral products could lead to fundamental changes in exchange relationships and consumption patterns and, for some commodities, had the potential to cause shifts in production and in the accompanying patterns of social and political relationships.

Even if some should query the relevance of the topics he chooses (which I certainly would not), no-one can fail to be impressed by Ptak's painstaking exploitation of Chinese, Portuguese, Dutch and Scandinavian sources. This meticulous unravelling of a seemingly endless series of small puzzles, which the Dutch call 'monks' work', is the necessary foundation of analysis. Perhaps it is true that a few less patient or less qualified scholars might make the error of seeing his concerns as 'trivial'. In their haste to capture the essential nature of Asian economic development, or the reasons for the apparent triumph of the upstart industrial West over the massive economy of China or the productivity of India, they might judge the details of sailing routes or clove markets to be irrelevant. This would be a serious mistake, as it is the accumulation of verified detail that underpins, or weakens, the grand hypotheses. We are all indebted to scholars like Roderich Ptak for the care and quality of their work, and this volume will be gratefully used by all serious students of Asian maritime history.

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M. Jocelyn Armstrong, R. Warwick Armstrong and Kent Mulliner (eds), *Chinese populations in contemporary Southeast Asian societies*. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 2001, xiv + 268 pp. ISBN 0700713980 (paperback).

SIKKO VISSCHER

This volume of ten papers on the Chinese in contemporary Southeast Asia is the tangible result of an academic conference held from 10 to 12 March 1997 at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Two themes, the editors profess, are central to the volume's approach to issues of social position and identity: regional interdependence, and international influence. They admit, however, that neither theme is really new, and in fact the two seem to have been chosen mainly in order to marry the strengths of area studies with a focus on transnationalization and globalization.

Readers can look forward to interesting and stimulating individual papers which are competent contributions to their respective fields. The chapters can be loosely grouped into four categories, the first introductory in nature and the others dealing respectively with commerce, community, and issues of nationality and transnationality. The first three contributions introduce the reader respectively to the composition of the Chinese populations in the region (Jocelyn and Warwick Armstrong), to their historical contexts (Norman Parmer) and to their economic roles (Leo Suryadinata). Of the papers on commerce, Hong Liu addresses Singaporean transnational connections with Malaysia while Theresa Chong Carino looks at the various levels on which the Philippine Chinese chambers of commerce operate. The next three chapters are community-based anthropological studies. Jean De Bernardi examines the localization of Christianity in Singapore and Malaysia, while Judith Nagata analyses world religions as sources of power among Chinese women in Malaysia. Sharon Carstens focuses on the diasporic identity of the Hakka. Finally, Tan Chee Beng looks at the changing global context of Chinese identity, while Donald Nonini addresses diasporic Chinese in the transnational setting of the Asia-Pacific.

A common weakness of edited conference volumes, which is at the same time often the strength of the conferences they are derived from, is multidisciplinaryity. The spirit of multidisciplinaryity is present and the disciplinary boundaries are willingly crossed during the conference sessions, but when it comes to writing the final contributions all participants fall back on their own methodological backgrounds, while the editors continue to profess their adherence to the general principle of multidisciplinaryity. This book is no exception to the general pattern. A more serious weakness is that central, shared definitions of key concepts are lacking. The meanings of 'local',

'region', 'global', and even 'Chinese' vary between the contributions and are sometimes communicated to the reader in underlying assumptions or in vague, broad descriptions. Historicity, moreover, is not treated in the same manner throughout the chapters. While Parmer and Chong Carino do make a systematic attempt to address change through time, the anthropological contributions in general do not. By way of example: it is surprising that Liu, who focuses his paper on transnationality in the first decade after Singaporean independence (1965-1975), does not fully acknowledge that the idea of 'the border' was a novelty in this setting, whereas networks of institutional, corporate and individual cooperation spanning the space where that border would later be drawn had already been in existence for one hundred and fifty years. Transnationality, in this historical context, is therefore a confusing focus which is in need of a higher degree of problematization. Liu seems to imply that this was an early instance of 'modern' behaviour, and viewed in the light of later trends, including continuing globalization toward the end of the century and the fascination with border crossing to which this has given rise, it is not hard to see why. But would it not be more objective to see the border itself as a modern development, created by decolonization, which interfered with pre-existing patterns of cosmopolitan trade, finance and power politics?

In conclusion, this volume does offer an interesting set of historical and anthropological case studies and theoretical analyses of some ethnic Chinese communities within, or hailing from, Southeast Asia. It does not, however, present a complete overview of the Chinese in the region. Those interested in Indochina and Burma, for instance, will not find what they are looking for here. Nor does this volume present a single unifying focus or set of definitions and theories by means of which to understand the wealth of information presented in the chapters. It is a pity that the editors did not exercise more of their editorial rights by forcing the authors to use the same definitions and angles of attack. If they had done so, a much more rigorous introductory chapter could then have pulled the book together as a more coherent academic statement.

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Clifford Sather, *Seeds of play, words of power; An ethnographic study of Iban shamanic chants*. Kuching: Tun Jugah Foundation, 2001, xvii + 753 pp. [Borneo Classic Series 5.] ISBN 9834051352 (paperback). Price: MYR 95.00.

REED WADLEY

*Deru'-deru' guntur mabu' / Munyi ke mabak gerugu' / Batu galang menyadi.* 'Rumble, rumble, the crash of nearby thunder / The sound of boulders tearing loose / The shattering of solid stone' (pp. 204-5). So begins the Iban shamanic chant of *pelian anchau bidai*, 'to spread the working mat'. These are only three of the 3,300 lines of Iban text and translation in this magnificent study by Clifford Sather, one of the leading authorities on Iban ritual and society. In addition to translating eight *pelian* chants and one *gawai* chant, Sather sets out the ethnographic and cosmological background to the chants and their accompanying rituals. As with his previous work, Sather focuses on the Iban of the Saribas River, and on the *manang* (shamans) who performed *pelian* rites and sang the beautiful, complex narratives (*leka pelian*) in their spirit journey to find and retrieve the wandering souls of the living, and to escort the newly-severed souls of the dead.

The eight background chapters are rich in detail, covering shamanic terms, concepts, and practices, with a good deal of anecdotal information on specific Saribas *manang*. Anyone interested in shamanism in Southeast Asia would do well to consult these chapters. Sather covers topics such as receiving the call to become a *manang*, apprenticing with a senior *manang*, acquiring a spirit guide, and undergoing the *bebangun* initiation rites. He describes the *manang's* ambivalent role within Iban society, his trickster status, his manipulation of and transcendence over the seen and unseen worlds. Attending to the 'disturbed relationships between humankind and the dead, spirits, and gods' (p. 22), the *manang* is seen as a different category of human: to become a *manang* is to no longer be an ordinary human (*iban*). (Indeed, upon death, *manang* do not go to Sebayon, the afterworld for ordinary humans, but rather to their own place at the summit of Bukit Rabung.)

Sather addresses Iban concepts of illness, health, and personhood; spirits and their role in afflictions; and myth and cosmos, detailing not only how the shaman travels within and between the cosmic layers, but also the mythic origins of the *manang*. He traces the curing performance (along with methods of diagnosis), the ritual use of space (for instance, in the longhouse), and the final stages of a curing ritual, including restoring the soul to its afflicted owner, protecting the souls of the longhouse residents, and calling the shaman's own soul back from its journey. A separate chapter provides specific detail on the chants themselves, covering poetic structure, rhyme, and melo-



dy; the nature of the chants' deeply metaphorical language; and the reliance on natural and social landscapes to trace both the itinerary of the lost soul and the *manang*'s journey to find it. Sather even includes, in an appendix, a contribution from an ethnomusicologist, Patricia Matusky, who rendered the *pelian anchau bidai* to musical notation.

To my mind, the most important part of the book – the chants themselves in full text and translation – lies in the second half. In addition to the *pelian anchau bidai*, Sather has transcribed and translated *pelian* concerned with recovering souls from under *kara'* (Ficus species) tree roots, tending to the patient's spiritual plant image (*bunga*), journeying to the otherworld, slaying the afflicting spirit, separating the soul from its deceased owner, and protecting the souls of the longhouse residents. In addition, he includes the chant of the now defunct *gawai betawai*, a curing ritual apparently unique to the Saribas which groups of *manang* performed together.

The original texts are exquisite, replete with meaning and flowing rhyme, and Sather's English translations do them a good deal of justice. Some items from the *pelian beserara' bunga* ('Severing the flower') will serve here to illustrate the rich symbolism and beautiful poetry of the chants as a whole. This *pelian* is designed to end the period of mourning taboos following a death; its symbolic role is to convince the soul of the deceased to leave its grieving kin and journey to the otherworld.

*Peda' duduk dugau-dugau sida' ke lenyau dulu' lesi' / Ba' pun rengun bunga nanyi. / Ai' mata iya balat nyaya labuh entali, / Ke serintak nyabak inggar dedui. / Lembau ninggal ka selantang anak lelaki, / Enggau enda' tetinggal ka rumah kami ka mua' pengerami munyi nengeri pasar bedagang.* (Behold, the Dead One sits pensively at the base of a fragrant *nanyi* flower. / His teardrops fall steadily, / And, lamenting, he weeps loudly, / For he is reluctant to leave behind his happy son / And the others of the longhouse who make merry like traders at the bazaar.)

*Lalu bejaku' Lansu, Manang Usam, / 'Kati ku' aku enda' nyerara' magi nuan? / Nuan ga' udah lesi' bebadai laya danjan, / Laban petara nadai agi' ngemata ngintu nuan, / Nya' alai tingkil ga' nuan baka selinggir ujung dan.* (Then speaks Lansu, Shaman Usam, / 'How can I not separate you? For you have died, / because the gods no longer watch over you. / Therefore I break you off like a twig from the end of the main branch.') (pp. 358-361.)

Coerced by the shaman to break its ties to the living, the soul sees itself as dead and finally accepts its fate. In a stanza that firmly places the deceased in the role of a helpful ancestor spirit, the dead person's soul declares its desire to assist its living descendants when called upon (pp. 262-3). Then, with wonderfully haunting finality, the soul tells the *manang*: '*Badu' meh kitai tu' bejaku' main bekenang*' (The time as come to talk [and yearn] no more).

Raymond Corbey, *Tribal art traffic; A chronicle of taste, trade and desire in colonial and post-colonial times*. Amsterdam: Royal Tropical Institute, 2000, 255 pp. ISBN 9068321978. Price: USD 25.00 (paperback).

BORIS WASTIAU

Raymond Corbey's *Tribal art traffic* provides us with a pioneering ethnography of the little select world of dealing and collecting non-Western art, with special reference to Belgium and the Netherlands. The first part of the book describes the historical origins of collecting in the colonial period, together with post-colonial developments, the role of auction houses, museums and artists, and issues of cultural property. The second part consists of seven interviews with dealers, curators and private collectors who talk about their perspectives on each other and about what drives them to focus, each in their own ways, on non-Western art. In the first chapters, Corbey paints a detailed portrait of some of the first modern field collectors: dealers, ethnographers, curators, trading company employees, missionaries and other individuals involved in the trade in African, Oceanic and Indonesian art. The abundance of related and compared examples presented here opens up valuable lines of enquiry. While reading this book, one is bound to note that little knowledge is available on the agency of the people whose art was or is 'collected'. Who exactly sold? To whom, and why? Who was spoiled, and how? What is the situation today? This indigenous perspective seems rather necessary in order to counterbalance that of Western actors such as dealers and collectors.

Military personnel, administrators and middlemen seem to be missing from the inventory of early and contemporary actors in the tribal art traffic. Yet it was soldiers who were most directly responsible for enforcing the occupation and colonization of the European overseas territories. In Africa they were often the first Europeans to gather important collections of indigenous artefacts (in the form of war trophies). They were also the first to establish, and to some extent police, the borders across which (as Corbey remarks) the flow of artworks and cultural property has increased with every post-colonial war. A wide range of objects were confiscated by administrators too, to be either sold, destroyed, stored, or sent to metropolitan museums. Middlemen, finally, are seemingly dilettante collectors who regularly act as intermediaries in the search for very specific, major (and expensive) pieces for select international customers or museums which insist on absolute discretion.

In the second part of the book, the interviews with antiquarians consist of delightful stories in which the pot calls the kettle black. Earnestly convinced of their mission to preserve the world's moveable cultural heritage from the barbarity of its present owners by placing it in the care of Western collectors,

most of them see themselves as cultural heroes. Corbey relates how, in their presumed moral superiority, they stubbornly, openly and shamelessly refuse to comply with national and international laws protecting cultural heritage. In their eyes, anthropologists and archaeologists who actively support such protection are at best naive, and at worst nothing short of extremists. 'There is so incredibly much!', exclaims one dealer. 'At a certain point, enough is known about a certain culture's past, and museums contain enough finds of that time [to allow for the rest to be traded]' (quoted on p. 163). For another dealer, a further justification for the tribal art trade is that those now deprived of their material culture may one day be able to buy it back:

Very often local governments care little about such carvings, and do nothing to preserve them, while the population has long lost any interest in them. Is it so bad then if some of them are taken to the West for a while? There, they will end up in museums or with collectors who care about them. Today, a century later, the Japanese are buying back their prints, and the same thing could happen one day to African art. (dealer Tijs Goldschmidt, quoted on p. 190.)

In the salvage paradigm, it is interesting to note how dealers contrast themselves with Christian and Islamic iconoclasts instead of identifying themselves as one of the major causes of destruction of art and traditional culture *in situ*. They also claim to produce scientific knowledge. 'In the last thirty years or so', declares one, 'a great deal more has been found out about African forms of expression and their contexts, much if not most thanks to dealers, who have explored Africa thoroughly and uncovered a lot of new stuff' (quoted p 179). While it is indeed true that a handful of dealers produce scholarly publications, and that many more have helped to popularize hitherto little-known artistic traditions, the tribal art trade is characterized by a harsh extraction of cultural goods from their local context which renders proper interpretation (and, I contend, proper appreciation) virtually impossible. The consequences for peoples whose material culture is alienated are known to all parties. 'The tragic part of it', concedes one art trader, 'is that the dealers take away the good traditional pieces which are the examples the younger generation needs' (quoted p. 181).

Of utmost interest for the upcoming ethnography of collectors and dealers are the notes made by the author on the strict rules, including obligations to buy and interdictions against infringing on each other's territories, that regulate the interaction between the dealers, their runners and the clients. Purchase agreements, loans, exchange and pooling of money, and guarantees and settlements are also covered. Some interviewees explain how they assess the quality and value of a piece, and how they decide when to buy and sell. The reader learns to discriminate between several different categories of collectors as identified by dealers, curators and collectors themselves. Not all

collectors are interested in the same kinds of item, or in items of comparable quality, and different collectors sometimes have strikingly different motivations. There are indications that specific approaches to collecting are typical of Belgium, the Netherlands and the United States respectively. *Tribal art traffic* is a book which anyone interested in the looting and trading of cultural property must read.

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Wong Kwok-Chu, *The Chinese in the Philippine economy, 1898-1941*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1999, xvi + 279 pp. ISBN 9715502999. Price: USD 23.00 (paperback).

WILLEM G. WOLTERS

Wong's book, based on a doctoral dissertation submitted at Australian National University, is the first comprehensive study on the Chinese in the Philippines under the American colonial administration from 1898 until the Japanese invasion in 1941. The book neatly links up with Wickberg's (1965, 2000) studies on the late Spanish period. The literature on the Philippine Chinese in the first half of the twentieth century is limited to a few unpublished doctoral dissertations and a handful of books on special aspects of the group such as its national consciousness, its legal position and its social organization. Wong focuses on the growth of the ethnic Chinese community in the Philippines and its economic and business activities in the first four decades of the twentieth century. His intention is not only to paint an overall 'faceless' picture of the Chinese community, but also to provide case studies and little vignettes of particular Chinese personalities and their business dealings.

The book is divided in two parts. Part One gives an overview of the Chinese community during the 1898-1941 period, from the difficult years of the first decade under American rule, through the period of economic expansion from 1909 to the end of the 1920s, and ending with the period of stagnation during the Depression of the 1930s. During this period the Chinese entrepreneurs acquired and maintained a strong position in the domestic economy. Early on under the American regime they had abandoned the intermediary role in the export economy which they had fulfilled under the Spanish administration during the last decades of the nineteenth century. Part Two deals with the Chinese way of doing business in the Philippines, with extensive discussion of the credit and banking system, the middleman role in the economy, and Chinese entrepreneurship.

In his concluding chapter the author tries to answer the question of which

factors can explain the successes of the ethnic Chinese entrepreneurs in the Philippines. Although he recognizes that a multitude of explanations can be brought forward, he singles out four key factors. The first is the Philippine context: the fact that the islands had become an agricultural export economy, which created a relatively strong domestic economy providing business opportunities for the Chinese. The second factor is a cluster of Chinese social features which allowed members of this group to maximize their opportunities: the family system, the norm of *xinyong* (trustworthiness) in business relations, and strong financial networks. The third factor is what Wong calls the sojourning mentality: that is, the expectation among Chinese migrants that they would eventually return to China with their wealth. This attitude motivated them to work hard, to save, to send remittances to mainland China, but also to invest in their own businesses in the islands. As conditions in China became unsettled in the 1930s, many Chinese realized that returning home was not possible and that their future lay in the Philippine islands. The fourth factor is what Wong calls the 'Entrepreneur Factor', the success of the Chinese family firms. At the end of his study Wong points out that while many of the Chinese businesses in the Philippines have been successful, none has been able to enter the category of the largest Chinese businesses in Southeast Asia (where one finds, for example, Oei Tiong Ham's sugar firm in the Netherlands Indies, and Tan Kah Kee's and Lee Kong Chian's rubber enterprises in Malaya). The reason for this was that the Philippine Chinese were not involved in large-scale export of agricultural products, where the greatest amount of money was made, but rather had entrenched themselves in the domestic economy, where profits were much smaller.

Wong has based his study on archival materials and published sources on the period under discussion. He has worked in the National Archives in the United States, and has visited libraries in the Philippines and Australia. Unfortunately a certain (and probably large) amount of source materials, including Chinese newspapers and documents, was lost in the fires that ravaged Manila in the last weeks of the Pacific War. However, Wong has made good use of the available material. He has also used Chinese language materials published in China, which contain much information on Chinese entrepreneurs and community leaders in the Philippines. He has traced the activities of more than 100 Chinese personalities, about 150 companies, and large numbers of Chinese-Filipino organizations.

In Part Two of his study, on the Chinese way of doing business in the Philippines, Wong has collected most if not all of the available information on Chinese business practices. However, it is disappointing to notice that this material does not allow us to look deeper into the Chinese business organizations. More specific information would have been welcome on, for instance, the Chinese system of bookkeeping, credit transactions between firms, infor-

mal banking practices, speculation, and the role of social organization (clans, regional groups). Apparently contemporaries did not find it useful to study these topics. Chinese businesspeople themselves considered these practices natural and not worthy of description, while Filipino and American observers did not expect to benefit from delving deeper. One does not find in the Philippine literature of the period an equivalent of the study undertaken by the tax department in the Netherlands Indies on the Chinese business world (Vleming 1926). Being a conscientious historian who sticks closely to his sources, Wong has not tried to fill in the gaps with information from other countries or a later period. Otherwise he could have used Limlingan's (1986) study on the overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia, with its detailed analysis of business practices used in the Chinese trading company (for instance, a preference for quick business deals, a low-margin/high turnover strategy, a cash-flow system, centralized management, and strong social control). These management practices go a long way toward explaining the success of Chinese firms. Wong has included Limlingan's study in his references, but has not used the latter's analysis of management practices, probably because he does not want to project the analysis of a later period onto his historical narrative. Limlingan made his observations in the 1970s and early 1980s, and although this was outside Wong's period, Limlingan's penetrating analysis suggests that the practices he described have been standard for Chinese trading companies in Southeast Asia since the late nineteenth century.

Wong's carefully documented and well-written study is an important addition to the economic history of the Philippines, and the author can be congratulated on this achievement.

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## Review article

*Peoples of the Southeast Asian Massif*  
*Three ethnographic surveys*

Jean Michaud (ed.), *Turbulent times and enduring people; Mountain minorities in the South-East Asian Massif*. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 2000, xiii + 255 pp. ISBN 070711805. Price: GBP 45.00 (hardback).

Jane Richard Hanks and Lucien Mason Hanks (with a foreword by Nicola Tannenbaum), *Tribes of the North Thailand frontier*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 2001, xlviii + 319 pp. [Monograph 51.] ISBN 0938692763. Price USD 25.00 (paperback); 0938692755, USD 37.00 (hardback).

Stephen Mansfield, *Lao hill tribes; Traditions and patterns of existence*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000, vii + 91 pp. ISBN 9835600619. Price: GBP 10.99 (hardback).

VOLKER GRABOWSKY

The three books under review deal with the ethnography and ethnohistory of a culturally diverse region often referred to as the 'Southeast Asian Massif'. In the introduction to the first volume John McKinnon and Jean Michaud point out that in the mountainous areas of greater mainland Southeast Asia roughly '65 million minority peoples [...] are scattered over a trans-national domain of approximately 2.5 million km<sup>2</sup>, which includes south-west China, northern and eastern Burma, northern Thailand, eastern Cambodia, northern and central Vietnam, and nearly all of Laos' (p. 5). These peoples belong to more than 50 different ethnic denominations and three main linguistic 'superstocks', labelled 'Tibeto-Burman', 'Austro-Thai', and 'Austro-Asiatic' (p. 14). However, the inclusion of the Hmong and Yao (Mien) along with the Tai-Kadai in a so-called 'Austro-Thai superstock', from a linguistic point of view, is controversial. The present reviewer prefers 'upland ethnic minorities' (H. Jonsson) as the most appropriate generic term for the heterogeneous group of peoples in question, although other scholars use a wide variety of different terms reflecting different ethnographic perspectives and traditions, including 'Montagnards', 'Highlanders' and 'highland minorities'. 'Uplanders', the term coined by Jane and Lucien Hanks in the second volume, has the merit of avoiding misconceptions and biased connotations. The still widely used label 'hill tribes' (Mansfield), by contrast, disregards the fact that several

minority peoples are wet-rice cultivators and have developed complex social organizations.

The nine contributions contained in the book edited by Jean Michaud cover all the upland areas and peoples in the five countries of the Massif – although Thailand, where the proportion of upland ethnic minorities is lowest (1-2 per cent), is perhaps somewhat over-represented due to the fact that it offers the most convenient conditions for foreign researchers. Although most of the nine contributions are revised versions of papers presented at the annual meeting of the Association for South-East Asian Studies in the United Kingdom (ASEASUK) held at the University of Hull in 1997, as a whole the collection does not lack coherence and inner logic. The first three chapters – on the 'Hmong in Laos and Thailand' by Christian Culas, on "'Montagnards" in Upper Tonkin' by Jean Michaud, and on 'Christian missionary activities among the Hmong in Yunnan' by Alison Lewis – deal with various aspects of ethnohistory, in particular with patterns of migration during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

This excellent historical section of the book is followed by equally enlightening chapters on changes in inter-ethnic relations due to political interventions by the modern nation-state. Oscar Selemink's analysis of Vietnamese ethnic policies in the central Annamite highlands is a good case in point. François Robinne's alluring account of how the poly-ethnic area around the Inle lake, situated in the western part of the Shan state, has evolved from a region dominated by the Shan to a zone represented mainly by the Intha ethnic group is fascinating. The collapse of the traditional Shan administration, following Ne Win's military coup d'état, was crucial for the assertion of social supremacy by the more dynamic Intha. Although Clive Christie's thoughtful article on the development of Karen ethnic nationalism deals less with ethnic issues than with the development of political ideas, and is therefore somewhat removed from the theme of inter-ethnic relations, it provides a good case study of changing self-perceptions among ethnic minorities under colonial and post-colonial rule. Although the Karen lack an historical empire like the Müang Mao federation of the Shan, and are scattered across a wide area including the delta of the Irrawaddy River, in Christie's opinion the Karen aspiration for a 'Karenistan' is nevertheless a plausible explanation for the intensification of Karen nationalism since such a state 'would have been as a haven, a "homeland" for Karens, where guaranteed Karen sovereignty could have assured ultimate safety for the Karen people' (p. 119).

The last three contributions deal with the present-day social and economic problems of various upland ethnic minorities. The emphasis is on the Hmong, Yao, and the Karen of northern Thailand. Based on decades of ethnographic field research in the region, Peter Kunstadter, one of the great pioneers of such research, discusses the rapid economic and demographic



changes affecting the Hmong in the upper north of Thailand. The impact of trekking tourism on the economy of Ban Chaidee, a Karen village in Chiang Rai province, is analysed by Henry Bartsch. He argues that one consequence of this new industry is that the village has become more firmly integrated into the Thai nation-state and the national economy (p. 212). Hjørleifur Johnsson, finally, demonstrates how sports competitions, dance shows and other cultural activities, such as the Phulangka fair in a Mien (Yao) village in Phayao province, provide a vehicle for national integration (in this case into the Thai state) and for the development of ethnic networks.

As its title suggests, as a whole the book gives a good insight into the 'turbulent times' of the 'enduring peoples' in the Southeast Asian Massif. The present reviewer agrees with the editor's plea for more and deeper ethno-historic studies using the rather large quantities of relevant colonial archive material which are available (p. 71). Christian Culas has made a start in this respect with his thorough analysis of Hmong migrations. He convincingly shows that the second and largest wave of Hmong migration to northern Laos in the 1870s and 1880s was stimulated by intense political and military pressures set up by the invasions of the Chinese Flags (called *Hò* by the Thai). Culas quotes a French census of Tran-Ninh (Lao: Xieng Khouang, the Plain of Jars) from 1900 which indicates that at that time one tenth of the region's 40,000 people were already Hmong and Yao immigrants. However, a Siamese census taken in 1889, shortly before the French takeover, gave the numbers of Hmong and Yao at almost 8,000, or fully 32 per cent of the then 25,000 inhabitants of Xieng Khouang. This suggests that comparative use of Thai (as well as Burmese, Chinese and other Asian) archival sources alongside French (and British) colonial records might prove an even more fruitful way of reconstructing historical migration patterns.

An outstanding example of such an endeavour is Jane and Lucien Hanks' challenging study *Tribes of the North Thailand frontier*. The draft of this work was already completed when Lucien Hanks died in 1988, but it took more than a decade to transform the early draft into a coherent book. Apart from the late author's wife Jane Hanks, a team of further scholars, including Richard O'Connor, Nina Kammerer, Hjørleifur Jonsson, and Nicola Tannenbaum (who wrote the long foreword), also participated in this project. Exploiting the fruits of almost two decades of ethnographic fieldwork in northern Thailand (1963-1979), Jane and Lucien Hanks reconstruct the history of the mountainous northern districts of Chiang Rai province. They refer to this area of 775 square miles, with its diverse population living in some 320 villages, as 'Müang Kham'. It is part of the area widely known as the Golden Triangle (Thai: *Sam Liam Thòng Kham*; *kham* means 'gold' in the Tai languages of the region).

The book is divided into two sections of almost equal length. The second section comprises six of the eight chapters. Here the Hanks give a broad general survey of life in the hills of the Thai-Burma borderlands. The relative autonomy and isolation of the upland communities has been threatened since the early 1950s by various external forces, including Christian and (to a lesser extent) Buddhist missionaries, remnants of the Chinese Kuomintang, and above all the agencies of the Thai state, which was concerned about possible Communist infiltration from Indochina. The subsequent challenges of the 1970s and 1980s, such as loss of agricultural land and the accelerating transformation from a subsistence to a monetary economy, forced the uplanders to reach various kinds of accommodation with the lowland social and political environment. The Hanks are optimistic about the ultimate survival of the upland societies, pointing out that these have already been living under dominant lowland cultures for many centuries. Upland peoples and lowland Tai groups, moreover, share a number of cultural features, including a common belief in the ritual transmission of authority from the supernatural and divine sphere to the socio-political domain (*müang*).

Both upland and lowland groups have been profoundly influenced by China. The Hanks demonstrate in the first section of their study, which is devoted to history, how the upland populations – notably the Hmong, Yao, and Lahu – were influenced by the Chinese system of ruling the 'Southern Barbarians'. Making use of a wide range of Chinese and Western sources, the authors provide an excellent introduction to the history of the ethnic groups in the borderlands of southwestern China and upper mainland Southeast Asia. Special attention is given to the symbiotic relationship between the uplanders and the petty Tai principalities or *müang* of the region. The vital military importance of 'upland tribal' manpower for the defence of these *müang* is confirmed by the records of many nineteenth-century Western visitors. During the three Kengtung wars of 1850-1854, for example, 'Akha units in the service of Kengtung were credited with valour for harassing the retreating Thai army' (p. 35). The detailed reconstruction of the population movements in the area of Müang Kham, combining written records with oral traditions, is a fine contribution to the ethnohistorical genre championed by Michaud as a direction of further research.

With dozens of ethnic minority peoples accounting for more than 40 per cent of its roughly five million-strong national population, Laos is probably the most heterogeneous nation-state in the Southeast Asian Massif. Stephen Mansfield's overview of 'Lao hill tribes', then, should in principle be a welcome contribution to the field. This work, a small volume, discusses history, migration patterns, and the system of religious beliefs, as well as various aspects of material culture, such as textiles, music, and money. Unfortunately, however, this publication cannot live up to even modest expectations. When

discussing the migration myths of various 'tribal' groups (Akha, but also Tai Daeng and Lü), for example, the author himself becomes the victim of an old and evidently indestructible myth which holds that by the eighth and ninth centuries, 'the Tai were sufficiently united to have established their own kingdom in Nan Chao' (p. 13). In reality, however, the poly-ethnic Nan Chao kingdom was dominated by peoples of Tibeto-Burman stock. Its ruling family did not speak any Tai language (see Hanks, p. 7). *Lao hill tribes* contains many more such minor mistakes, too numerous to be ignored. To mention just a few of them: 'kha' is not a Khmer word for slave but a Lao term; the Lao king who disappeared in the tribal region of Attapue in southern Laos or northern Cambodia in 1571 was not Sam Saen Thai (ruled 1373/4-1416), but Sai Setthathirat I (ruled 1548-1571); Father Giovanni Maria Leria, one of the few Europeans to visit the landlocked kingdom in the sixteenth century, was not a 'Portuguese missionary' (pp. 16, 84) but a Genoese, as was the priest Giovanni Filippo de Marini, who published Leria's account of his journey to Laos in 1663. Laurent Chazée's important work on ethnic groups and sub-groups in Laos, finally, is not listed in the 'select bibliography'.

The publication of *Turbulent times and enduring peoples* and *Tribes of the North Thailand frontier* has enriched the study of the cultures and histories of the so-called minority peoples of the Southeast Asian Massif. Non-specialists as well as specialists will find both works readable and informative. General readers will find in Mansfield's *Lao hill tribes*, which contains a nice collection of illustrations, some general information on those 'tribes' which is useful for orientation purposes. The present reviewer, however, must refrain from giving this work his recommendation as a serious guide to its subject matter.